

THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT  
IN BULGARIA

PRINCETON STUDIES IN HISTORY

VOLUME I



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
CONSTITUTIONAL  
GOVERNMENT  
IN  
BULGARIA



By C. E. Black

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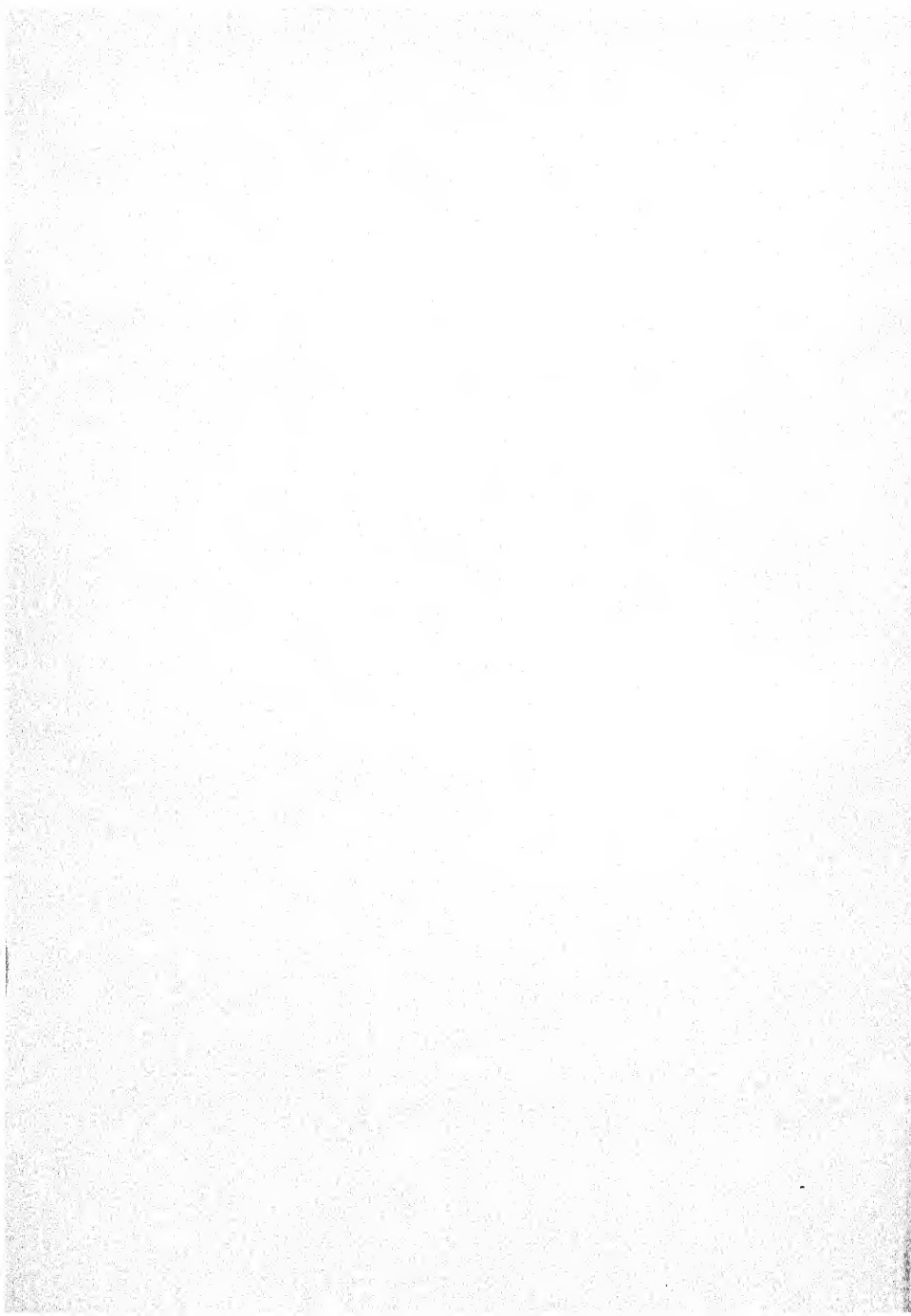
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*To My Parents*



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*January 1943*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

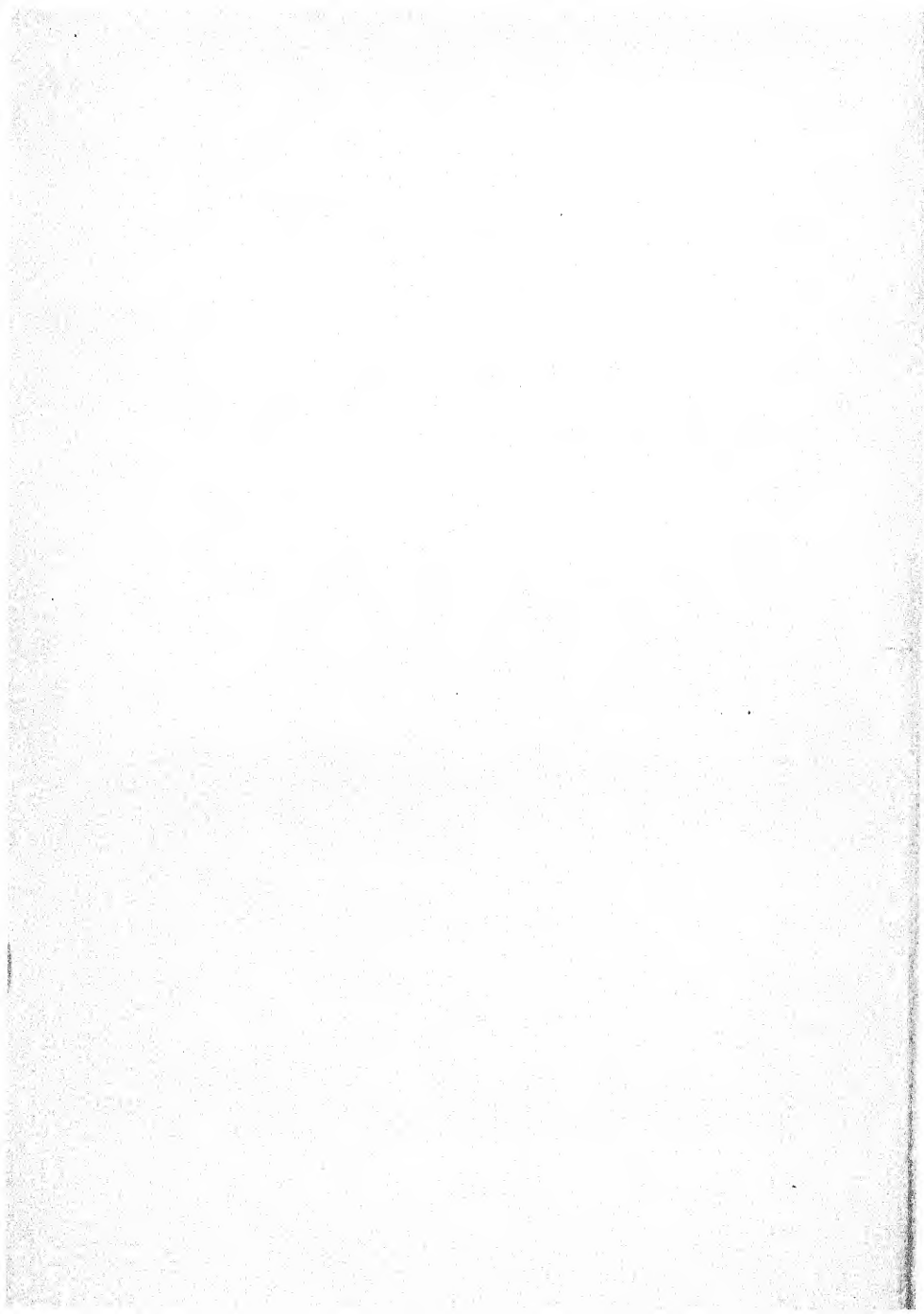
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
I. INTRODUCTION	3
II. THE SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONSTITUTION	7
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS	7
BULGARIA AND THE TURKISH REFORM MOVEMENT	16
THE PENETRATION OF WESTERN IDEAS	23
THE TREND OF POLITICAL THOUGHT	31
CONCLUSION	47
III. THE PREPARATION OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE	52
THE RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATION OF BULGARIA, 1877-1878	52
THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE	57
THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE	65
IV. THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY	69
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY	69
THE INITIATIVE OF THE MODERATES	75
THE VICTORY OF THE EXTREMISTS	84
V. THE CONSTITUTION AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES	101
THE TIRNOVO CONSTITUTION OF 1879	101
THE POLITICAL PARTIES	110
PARTY LEADERS AND PARTY PRESS	124
VI. THE PRINCE AND THE EUROPEAN POWERS	134
PRINCE ALEXANDER OF BATTENBERG AND HIS CONSTITUTIONAL VIEWS	134

## Contents

RUSSIA'S POLICIES IN BULGARIA	142
THE ROLE OF THE WESTERN POWERS AND OF THE BALKAN STATES	148
VII. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN PRINCE AND ASSEMBLY, 1879-1881	156
THE FIRST CABINET	156
BATTENBERG AND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY	164
THE LIBERALS IN POWER	181
VIII. THE SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION, 1881-1883	192
THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF MAY 1881	192
BATTENBERG'S REGIME, 1881-1882	210
THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY, 1882-1883	221
IX. THE RESTORATION OF THE CONSTITUTION, 1883-1885	233
THE FORMATION OF THE BULGARIAN COALITION, 1883	233
THE CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT, 1883-1884	244
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STABILITY, 1884-1885	256
X. CONCLUSION	265
APPENDICES	273
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY	275
THE BULGARIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1879	291
THE STATUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE	311
THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION PROPOSED IN 1883	315
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TRANSLITERATION OF THE BULGARIAN ALPHABET	321
INDEX	325



THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT  
IN BULGARIA



## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

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UPON its liberation from Turkish rule in 1878, Bulgaria was faced with the problem of finding a form of government appropriate to its new position. It was handicapped by a political heritage which included no tradition of self-government and by a strategic position which made it the center of a major diplomatic problem. It was part of an economic system which was necessarily dependent on a larger area and, finally, it had developed nationalist aims which the imperialist powers were not prepared to satisfy. These are problems which more than one state of Central and Eastern Europe faced during the past century, and it is the special task of this study to treat them as they affected Bulgaria during the years from 1878 to 1885.

This period forms a complete cycle in the constitutional history of Bulgaria. It begins with the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin, both of which made provisions for an independent Bulgarian government, and proceeds through seven years during which great interest was shown in constitutional matters and many of the fundamental problems were thoroughly discussed. After a varied career, the parliamentary form of government finally found its equilibrium during the years from 1883 to 1885, when the prince and the assembly worked together in harmony. As a result of the Treaty of Berlin, the history of independent Bulgaria may be interpreted as the parallel and often contradictory development of internal policy and foreign policy. The constant problem of the former has been to find a form of government suitable to the social and economic condition of the country, and of the latter to attain the national territorial aims represented by the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano. The attempts to solve these

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

two problems have frequently worked at cross-purposes, and it is for this reason that the period from 1878 to 1885 forms a complete unit. As it was impossible for the Bulgarian government to pursue its aims in foreign policy during the first few years after the Treaty of Berlin, all the efforts of the country were devoted to working out a satisfactory form of government.

The union of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia in September 1885, brought about chiefly by forces outside the sphere of official government policy, immediately forced all problems of a constitutional nature into the background. The political and diplomatic crisis produced by the union was so severe that it was a decade before constitutional issues regained their original position, and indeed it was fundamentally on the lines established in the period from 1883 to 1885 that the parliamentary system continued to flourish in Bulgaria until 1934. It is for these reasons, then, that the year 1885 has been taken as the terminal point for this study of constitutional government in Bulgaria.

This period has too frequently been treated by historians as though the only issue after 1878 were that of preventing the domination of the Balkans by Russia, causing the interplay of power politics on Bulgarian soil, while the constitution and the various struggles centering around it were merely a respectable façade behind which European imperialism operated on the Balkan front. As a matter of fact, however, there was a very real constitutional movement within the country itself, and it was for the purposes of their political programs that the party leaders always tried to win the support of one of the contending empires. The imperial agents, whether Russian, Austrian or British, considered it a great success if they could further their countries' aims by backing the program of one of the political parties. The party leaders, on the other hand, solicited their financial and moral support without ever intending

## *Introduction*

to sacrifice any of Bulgaria's interests for the sake of a foreign program of imperial expansion. Seen in this light, the picture becomes one of a real constitutional struggle in Bulgaria, carried on within the framework of the larger struggle of the powers, all intent on preventing the domination of the Near East by any single empire. The events of 1878 to 1885 may thus be interpreted from the Bulgarian point of view as being primarily a constitutional struggle, with the rivalry of the powers in the background.

The problem of the beginnings of constitutional government in Bulgaria will be treated in the present study under three main headings. The first concerns the extent to which the people of Bulgaria were prepared to take over the government of their country in 1878. It has frequently been claimed that Bulgaria emerged from Turkish rule completely innocent of any experience in political affairs. It is therefore important to discover how much self-government the Bulgarians had under Turkish rule, to what extent they were given jurisdiction over local and autonomous institutions, what points of view were expressed by the intellectual leaders of the country and how much discussion there was of the actual problems of the government of Bulgaria should it obtain political freedom. These questions are dealt with in the second chapter.

The second aspect of the problem concerns the Constitution of 1879. Widely proclaimed as the most liberal constitution in Europe at the time of its creation, it is important to discover how the text of this document was formulated. Did the Bulgarian "notables" have a hand in its preparation and, if so, for what reasons did they favor such a liberal form of government? Why did Russia permit such a document to be adopted in a territory still under her control, in view of her own practice in such matters? What were the models and precedents used in drawing up the Bulgarian Constitution? And, finally, to what extent

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

did the constitution receive the backing of the political leaders in Bulgaria, of the newly elected prince and of the foreign powers which regarded the country as their special field of interest? The third, fourth, fifth and sixth chapters take up these questions.

Lastly, there is the question of the actual course of constitutional government during the years 1879 to 1885. The struggle for power between the prince and the assembly soon became the central issue at stake. The attempt of the prince to exercise dictatorial powers led to a severe crisis which lasted from 1881 till 1883 and which involved the active participation of the interested foreign powers. The supporters of the parliamentary system then succeeded in regaining a dominant position, and the constitution functioned successfully until the union of 1885, which completely upset the political equilibrium which had been achieved. These events, and the various factors which affected them, are discussed in the seventh, eighth and ninth chapters.

## CHAPTER II. THE SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONSTITUTION

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### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

WHEN the second Bulgarian kingdom submitted to the rule of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the fourteenth century, the feudal system was firmly established in the country. It had been introduced in the tenth century during the reign of King Peter, and the form which it took was similar to that in Western Europe. The land was under the control of the nobility and the upper clergy, and the position of the peasants declined from one of comparative dignity and independence under the old Slavic *zadruga*, or communal family, to one of complete serfdom. In addition, the idea of the divine right of the king was introduced, and the privileged groups exercised their rights through a council of state which acted in an advisory capacity. The national assembly, or *súbor*, in which formerly all the *zadrugi* had been represented, was likewise altered to meet the new conditions and limited its membership to representatives of the nobility and the clergy.<sup>1</sup>

With the coming of the Turks, the essential character of this system was not changed. The conquerors simply took over the land from the nobility and clergy, and introduced in their place the *Spahi* system which formed the

<sup>1</sup> N. Stanev, "Búlgarskata obshtestvenost do osvobozhdenieto i Túrnovskata Konstitutsiya" [The social structure of Bulgaria before the liberation and the Tirnovo Constitution], *Búlgarska istoricheska biblioteka*, IV (1931), 148-151; D. Blagoev, *Prinos kúm istoriyata na sotsializma v Búlgariya* [Contribution to the history of socialism in Bulgaria] (Sofia, 1906), 3-9; Alois Hajek, *Bulgarien unter der Türkenherrschaft* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1925), 9-12.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

basis of their magnificent military machine. The titles to the land were distributed to the Turkish landlords in varying lots, but the land itself was held and worked by the Christians who reimbursed their landlords with taxes. Under these new conditions, many of the abuses of the old Bulgarian nobility were abolished and until the beginning of the Turkish decline in the seventeenth century the Bulgarian people enjoyed considerable prosperity and freedom. There were no restrictions on the use of the Bulgarian language, and justice was administered by Turkish judges in an equitable fashion.<sup>2</sup>

During this period of active Ottoman rule the Bulgarians played no real part in the government of the country, the great majority of them living on the land and forming a vital source of agricultural supply for the capital of the empire. In the outlying provinces, many of the former ruling groups had been able to strike a compromise with their new rulers and thus kept some of their rights and privileges, but in a country as close to the administrative centers of Constantinople and Adrianople as was Bulgaria, Turkish control was absolute. There were a number of groups within the country, however, which were able to acquire certain tax exemptions and other privileges by means of special services which were characteristic of the Turkish form of government. Thus the professional soldiers, the frontier and mountain guards, the military police, and the falconers, most of whom had disappeared by the eighteenth century, were recompensed for their services by exemption from a part or all of their taxes. This method was also used as a means of subsidizing certain industries regarded as im-

<sup>2</sup> Ivan Sakázov, *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929), 173-177, 186-188; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 9-13; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 155-160; Zhak Natan, *Ikonomicheska istoriya na Bŭlgariya* [Economic history of Bulgaria] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1938), I, 156-157; Albert Howe Lybyer, *The government of the Ottoman Empire at the time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (Cambridge, 1913), 100-103.



## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

portant by the rulers, such as cattle-raising, mining, the cultivation of rice and the supplying of charcoal and wood. But none of these groups occupied a position of any prominence, nor were they allowed any share in the responsibilities of government.<sup>3</sup>

With the end of Turkish expansion in the seventeenth century, the power of the central government declined rapidly and with it the highly centralized *Spahi* system. Henceforth, the Balkan peasants were no longer members of a large and carefully organized system of government, but fell more and more under the direct rule of the Turkish beys who now regarded the estates as their own, levying taxes and demanding forced labor without restraint. In the course of time the peasant population was almost completely enslaved by the corrupt and inefficient ruling class, and it was in reaction to this oppression that the movement for national autonomy took shape in the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

With the Turks depending so largely on the Christian population for their economic welfare, they gradually found it necessary to grant special rights and privileges to the more important economic groups. During the period of the Bulgarian national renaissance, dating roughly from the middle of the eighteenth century until the liberation, it is possible to distinguish three social groups: the peasants, the *chorbaji*, or gentry, and the commercial and artisan class.<sup>5</sup>

The lot of the peasants was a difficult one, although it improved somewhat after the reorganization of land tenure

<sup>3</sup> Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 178-186; S. S. Bobchev, "Dürzhavnopravniya i obshtestven stroi v Búlgariya prez vreme na osmanskoto vladichestvo" [The political, legal and social structure of Bulgaria during the period of the Ottoman rule], *Nauchen pregled*, VIII (1936), 29-31.

<sup>4</sup> Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 188-189; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 159-160; Iv. Minkov, "Istoricheskité koreni na nashité demokraticheski traditsii" [The historic roots of our democratic traditions], *Filosofski pregled*, IX (1937), 74-76.

<sup>5</sup> Natan, *op. cit.*, II, 157-158.

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

under the Tanzimat law of 1858. Until then, the agricultural workers fell into three main categories. The most fortunate were the *kesimji*, who lived in their own houses in villages which paid collectively fixed annual dues to the landlord in the form of produce and labor. The *ratai* resembled tenant farmers who also owned their own houses, but who lived on the lands of the landlord and were individually responsible for their taxes. A third group was formed by the day laborers, who worked on the fields of their landlords and received from one-half to two-thirds of what they produced. The Turkish policy of moving in Mohammedan peasants to share in the wealth of the land led eventually to a serious agrarian problem.<sup>6</sup> The agricultural methods were of the most primitive and the system of tenure placed a premium on laziness, so that agriculture as a whole progressed very slowly under Turkish rule. The three-field system was introduced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Grain, rice, fruit and, in the later period, tobacco and roses were the chief products of the soil, as well as some twenty varieties of vegetables.<sup>7</sup>

If any group can be said to have had some share in the government of the country, it was the *chorbaji*, or gentry, class. The origins of this group are somewhat obscure, although they were certainly not descendants of the old Bulgarian nobility as Jireček suggests. They were the wealthier peasants and townspeople who had accumulated a certain amount of property, and who housed and fed the Turkish officials who passed through their towns. They came to serve as intermediaries between the Turks and the common people, and the term *chorbaji* was extended to mean master, patron and benefactor. They were also the moneylenders, an occupation which aroused the antago-

<sup>6</sup> Bobchev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1936), 33-35; Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 191-196; Minkov, *loc. cit.*, IX (1937), 78.

<sup>7</sup> Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 197-206.

nism of many of their fellow countrymen. As intermediaries, the gentry acquired an official position and in some parts of Bulgaria members of this class were elected by the population and placed in charge of the collection of taxes. In their capacity as tax collectors, as in their other activities, the gentry had to bear the brunt of the popular discontent with the Turkish rule, and thus acquired the reputation of being traitors to the popular cause and oppressors of the people. This feeling of hostility played an important part in the revolutionary movement, the word *chorbaji* being frequently used as a term of opprobrium in post-liberation politics.<sup>8</sup>

On the whole, however, the gentry do not seem to have deserved all of the hatred which was directed against them. In their official capacity, it is true, they tended to sympathize with the Turkish point of view and frequently co-operated with the authorities in opposing revolutionary activity. On the other hand, they participated generously in supporting schools and churches, joined in the struggle for ecclesiastical freedom, openly opposed the injustices of Turkish rule, and in some cases even aided and protected the revolutionary movement. The abuses of certain members of the gentry class were by no means the rule, and it was only the hatred of the revolutionary leaders for all who attempted to compromise with the Turkish rulers that gave the *chorbajis* such a bad reputation. Their importance as an integral part of the Turkish system is perhaps best exemplified by the law of 1857 which organized the institution of the *chorbajis* in the *sanjak* of Tirnovo. This meas-

<sup>8</sup> S. S. Bobchev, *La société bulgare sous la domination ottomane. Les tchorbadjis bulgares comme institution sociale et administrative* (Sofia, 1935), 3-7; Bobchev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1936), 36; Constantin Jireček, *Das Fürstenthum Bulgarien* (Vienna, 1891), 287-288; Minkov, *loc. cit.*, IX (1937), 79; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 161-165; Hristo Gandev, *Ranno vŭzrazhdane, 1700-1860* [Early renaissance, 1700-1860], "Studia historico-philologica serdicensia. Supplementi vol. III" (Sofia, 1939), 53-75.

ure was taken on the initiative of Midhat, the new and energetic governor, as a result of many complaints against the abuses of the gentry during the Crimean War. The *chorbaji* was henceforth to be elected annually by the people, and could not hold office two years in succession. He was paid a fixed salary for his duties of tax collecting, in order to insure the honest execution of his responsibilities. Visiting officials were provided with a regular travel allowance and were not permitted to buy provisions at prices below those at the local market. Finally, as a check on his activities, the *chorbaji* was required to present his accounts for inspection before the end of his term of office. Further sanctions were included, as were provisions for direct complaints to the Turkish authorities. While these particular provisions were limited to the *sanjak* of Tirnovο, they indicate the means which the Turkish authorities used to maintain their relations with the semi-autonomous Bulgarian institutions: the village communes, the church trustees and the guilds.<sup>9</sup>

Most important of all, however, both as leaders of the national renaissance and as pioneers in the acquisition of local rights and responsibilities, were the commercial and artisan groups which grew up in the new towns. Many of the medieval Bulgarian towns declined in importance after the Turkish conquest, partly because of the diversion of trade from the medieval land routes, and partly because of the disappearance of the need of towns for military defense against the Byzantine Empire. In their place, a new group of towns grew up to fulfill the functions demanded by the Turkish system. Some of the older towns, such as Sofia, Philippopolis and Adrianople, became centers of

<sup>9</sup> Bobtcheff, *La société bulgare*, 7-23; this same material is summarized in S. S. Bobčev, "Notes comparées sur les çorbacis chez les peuples balkaniques et en particulier chez les Bulgares," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, III (1938), 428-445.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

Turkish administration. Other towns, such as Nikopol, Vidin, Varna and Nish, became important for military defense, and the garrisons and fortresses located there provided an important market for many kinds of goods and services. Other towns grew up along the new trade routes. Harmanli, Pazarjik and Tsaribrod were on the route from Adrianople to Nish. The road from Philippopolis into Macedonia passed through Dupnitsa and Petrich, and the Danube route supported such towns as Svishtov, Ruschuk, Balchik and Kavarna. Each of these towns had its caravanserais, its market place and its workshops. From the point of view of the national renaissance, a most important role was played by the mountain towns where the hand of the Turkish ruler was less oppressive. In Gabrovo, Trevna, Troyan, Kotel, Koprivshtitsa and Panagyurishte the handicrafts flourished. These towns were almost entirely Bulgarian in population, and in normal times they led a quiet and prosperous life. Constantinople was the chief market for their products, in which textiles, the conservation of mutton and veal, and various kinds of metal work took the leading role.<sup>10</sup>

The great contribution which the artisans made to the renaissance was the guild system. The Turkish guilds had never acquired the strength of those in Western Europe. During the reign of Suleiman I laws were passed bringing the regulation of wages, prices and quality under the control of the state. With the decline of the authority of the central government, however, the abuses under this system became unbearable and, after organized protests by the guilds, their authority was returned to them in the seventeenth century. The guilds were organized on a national

<sup>10</sup> Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 217-237.

basis, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries over half of them were Bulgarian.<sup>11</sup>

The Bulgarian guilds were greatly strengthened in 1773 by a *ferman* of Mustafa III, which granted them a monopoly over certain markets and thus made them an indispensable part of the Turkish economy. But the importance of the guilds was far more than economic. It was rather the training and privileges of its members that gave the institution its place in the movement for national liberation. Similar to the medieval guilds of the West except for the requirement of a masterpiece, the Bulgarian guilds, or *esnafs*, were governed by the council, or *lonja* (from the Italian *loggia*), which was composed of all the masters and which met annually under the chairmanship of the chief master, or *ustabashi*. The chief master often formed a permanent executive committee with some of the leading masters. The jurisdiction of the *lonja* included such matters as electing officials, admitting new members, regulating wages, prices, qualities and dues and settling disputes. It also had the right to levy fines and could turn culprits over to the Turkish authorities. The treasury was a prominent part of the organization. It was supported by dues, fines and a profit tax and the large sums thus collected were used to buy raw materials, to make loans to members and even to outsiders, and especially to support the schools and churches. The rights and duties of the masters, companions and apprentices were carefully defined, and strict control was exercised over the conduct and morals of the younger members.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 237-239; V. Ganev, "Istoricheskoto razvitiie na turgovskoto pravo" [The historical development of commercial law], *Godishnik na sofiijskiya universitet. III. Yuridicheski fakultet*, XII (1915-16), 200-238.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 238-245; Minkov, *loc. cit.*, IX (1937), 72; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 160-161; Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 239-244; Georg Petkoff, *Die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse in Bulgarien vor der Befreiung* (Erlangen, 1906), 68-73.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

The gild members were in fact the backbone of the national renaissance. With the priests and schoolteachers whom they supported, they formed the bulk of the reading public which bought the books and read the newspapers and journals published by the new national writers. They provided the leaders in the movement for political independence, and it was they who assumed the leadership in the struggle to take the control of the church out of the hands of the Greek clergy and the gentry. The gild system developed qualities of respect for authority and for the public welfare which contributed greatly to the success of the church struggle, and which served the country in good stead after the liberation. As the only form of autonomous organization permitted by the Turks until the establishment of the autonomous church, the guilds formed the great national school for self-discipline and collective action, and at the same time provided the first rallying point for national feeling.<sup>13</sup>

Commerce was an important occupation in which a number of prominent Bulgarians accumulated large fortunes before the liberation. The Danube River and the Black Sea were both vital as trade routes, and sizeable Bulgarian colonies were established in Bucharest, Braila and Odessa, as well as in Constantinople.<sup>14</sup> A special position was occupied by the medical profession, which supplied a number of prominent leaders both before and after the liberation.<sup>15</sup> Modern industry played no part in the liberation movement, although modern factories were built in Sliven in 1840-1843, and in Stara Zagora in 1860. While the revolutionary leader Botšiv met with some success in

<sup>13</sup> Nik. Atanasov, *Sotsialniyat faktor v kulturno-literaturniya ni zhiivot predi osvobozhdenieto (Kulturno-sotsiologichen etjud)* [The social factor in our cultural and literary life before the liberation (A cultural and sociological study)] (Sofia, 1910), 11-68; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 164-167; Ganev, *Ranno vŭzrazhdane*, 77-92.

<sup>14</sup> Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 245-263.

<sup>15</sup> Jireček, *Bulgarien*, 290.

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

organizing workers' communes in the Bulgarian settlements in Reni, Oltenitsa, Galats, Braila, Bolgrad and Ismail in 1870 and 1871, there was no organized labor in Bulgaria proper. One reason for this lay in the opposition of the guilds to workers' associations.<sup>16</sup>

### BULGARIA AND THE TURKISH REFORM MOVEMENT

THE lot of the average Bulgarian under Turkish rule improved rapidly as the nineteenth century advanced. At its worst, a century earlier, the Ottoman regime in the Balkans had offered few checks to rapacious governors and marauding robbers. The system of provinces, or *eyalets*, established in the sixteenth century, gradually slipped out of the control of the central authorities as the strength of the empire declined. This left the provinces at the mercy of the local *pashas*, who frequently became independent rulers. In northwestern Bulgaria, famed Pazvanoglu held sway from his headquarters in Vidin. From 1794 to 1807 he successfully defeated the sultan's armies and negotiated treaties with the European powers, and only death brought an end to his rule.<sup>17</sup>

Under Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839), the worst of these abuses were stamped out. The power of the irresponsible governors was crushed and the mutinous janissaries were abolished. The first of the great series of reforms, destined eventually to transform the empire into a modern state, appeared shortly after Mahmud's death as the Hatti Sherif of 1839. This decree set up a council of state and centralized the taxing system. It also made broad

<sup>16</sup> Iv. G. Klincharov, *Istoriya na rabotnicheskoto dvizhenie v Bŭlgariya* [A history of the labor movement in Bulgaria] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1926-28), I, 6-16.

<sup>17</sup> Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Type-script; Cambridge, Mass., 1942), 5-11; Hajek, *op. cit.*, 64-82.



promises of freedom of person and of property which could not be fulfilled. There is no evidence that any significant changes resulted for the Bulgarian provinces, yet the decree aroused many hopes. It was translated into Bulgarian at Bucharest and distributed all over the countryside. The intentions of the government were at least in part sincere, but the problems of administration were as yet insuperable.<sup>18</sup> A few years later an appointed council, or *mejliis*, was provided for each provincial governor. It was supposed to serve as a check on the governor and at the same time as a form of representation for the non-Moslem subjects, but it was not a success. Here again, however, lack of evidence prevents any estimate as to the effects of this measure in Bulgaria.<sup>19</sup>

For the Bulgarian provinces the Crimean War was in almost every respect the great turning point in their fortunes. Until 1856, the national movement had had a slow uphill fight. A generation later, full independence was secured. The first gain was a result of the efforts of the powers to keep the empire alive by means of the Hatti Humayun of 1856, a new decree which again guaranteed the rights of the minorities and overhauled the financial and administrative structure of the empire. The difference in status between Moslems and non-Moslems was abolished, and the traditional religious rights were upheld.<sup>20</sup>

Bulgarian public opinion was now ready to take full advantage of the promised reforms, and a petition was soon launched asking for an independent church and for a native

<sup>18</sup> Harold Temperley, *England and the Near East. The Crimea* (London, 1936), 159-163; G. P. Genov, "Hati Sherifa i Hati Humayuna i tēhnoto znachenie za bŭlgarskiya narod" [The Hatti Sherif, the Hatti Humayun and their meaning for the Bulgarian people], *Bŭlgarska istoricheska biblioteka*, IV (1931), 67-74; Bobchev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1936), 25-27.

<sup>19</sup> Davison, *op. cit.*, 27-28, 180-188.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-34; Genov, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 84-95; S. S. Bobchev, "Coup d'oeil sur le régime juridique des Balkans sous le régime ottoman," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, I (1934-35), 523-532.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Bulgarian as civil governor of a united Bulgarian province. The latter request was an outgrowth of earlier aspirations for an autonomous position in the empire, and it met with no success. But the idea of an independent Bulgarian church was in accord with the spirit of the new decree and it now became the main goal of the Bulgarian leaders.<sup>21</sup>

Under the *millet* system which had first been introduced in the fifteenth century the Greek Orthodox Church, along with the other recognized faiths, had received an autonomous organization. In the eighteenth century the Orthodox *millet* was consolidated under the patriarchate of Constantinople, in which the Greek clergy refused to share their power with their Slavic coreligionists. The patriarchate soon became an instrument of cultural oppression in the hands of the Greeks and as their nationalist movement grew in strength the attempt was made to obliterate all vestiges of the Slavic languages in the schools and liturgy. In addition to its policy of denationalizing the non-Greeks, the patriarchate was characterized by graft and simony.

The discontent engendered by this system did not take form until the second half of the eighteenth century and indeed the famous call to action of Father Paisii in 1762 was directed largely against the abuses of the Greek clergy. Once the movement for ecclesiastical independence got under way, however, it came to occupy a great part of the intellectual forces of the country and formed the rallying point of the new Bulgarian nationalism. As the Turkish form of government implied the coincidence of religion with nationality, the struggle for a national church was in fact only the first step in the direction of political independence. The church assemblies of 1856, 1861 and 1871 were conducted in a democratic fashion, and a number of

<sup>21</sup> Petür Nikov, *Vüzrazhdane na bŭlgarskiya narod. Tsŭrkovno-natsionalni borbi i postizheniya* [The renaissance of the Bulgarian people. The achievements of the struggle for a national church] (Sofia, 1929), 78-84.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

the leaders in the religious issue were later active participants in the Constitutional Assembly of 1879.<sup>22</sup>

This phase of the national movement ended in 1870 with the assent of the Turkish government to the establishment of an independent Bulgarian exarchate. The church assembly which met to incorporate the new rights into a formal charter produced an organized and centralized form of ecclesiastical administration which remained in force until 1883. With the exception of the first head of the church, elected under special conditions, the exarch was to be selected by the Turkish government from three candidates designated by a council composed of the bishops and two elected delegates from each diocese. The governing body was the Holy Synod, consisting of four bishops elected by their colleagues for a four-year term. The Synod had jurisdiction over questions of faith and dogma and the regulation of the clergy. The administration of financial questions, and especially those relating to the establishment of schools, churches and hospitals, was confided to a lay council selected for a two-year term by the Synod from candidates elected by the dioceses. The dioceses, in turn, were administered by elected bishops and mixed councils, and the principle of the participation of laymen in ecclesiastical affairs was carried down to the districts and parishes, in the latter of which the priests were also elective. The result was a lay and almost a republican church organization despite the fact that it was set up by the more conservative of the Bulgarian leaders and met with the opposition of the revolutionary elements.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-18; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 19-23; Hajek, *op. cit.*, 140-150, 186-220.

<sup>23</sup> Stef. Zankow, *Die Verfassung der bulgarischen orthodoxen Kirche* (Zürich, 1918), 59-60; *Ustav za upravljenieto na bŭlgarskata ekzarhiya* [Charter for the administration of the Bulgarian exarchate] (Constantinople, 1870), 1-28; translated in a condensed form in Richard von Mach, *The Bulgarian exarchate; its history and the extent of its authority in Turkey* (London, 1907), 30-37; Nikov, *op. cit.*, 331-334, has a slightly different version; Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 167; Ganchev, *Ranno vŭzrazhdane*,

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

While the reforms of 1839 and 1856 cannot be said to have had any profound effect on the government of the Balkan provinces, they were nevertheless symbols of a progressive spirit which would eventually show more concrete results. At the initiative of Grand Vizier Mehmed Kibrisli, several commissions made tours of inspection in the Balkan *eyalets* in the years between 1860 and 1863. They revealed that while there was no systematic oppression of the population, local tyrannies and injustices were frequent and the system of tax-farming was a heavy burden. It was on the basis of the reports of these inspectors that the experimental Danube *vilayet* was set up in 1864.<sup>24</sup>

The law of 1864 abolished the *eyalets* and replaced them eventually with twenty-seven somewhat larger *vilayets*. These new provinces were modeled on the French system of *départements*, and were subdivided into *sanjaks* (*arrondissements*), *kazas* (cantons) and *nahiyes* (communes or hamlets). Improved *mejlisses*, or councils, were set up in each of the administrative divisions. While the supposed election of the non-Moslem members of the councils by the village elders remained a fiction, for the Turkish authorities kept a firm control over the councils through their appointive power and by property qualifications, they represented a great improvement over the preceding arrangements. The distinctive feature of the reform was a provincial assembly in each *vilayet*, in which two Christians and two Moslems represented each *sanjak*. The representation was in no sense democratic, nor did the assembly have any more than advisory powers, but at least it provided the basis for future improvement.<sup>25</sup>

In 1864 one experimental province was created. This

23-49; L. S. Stavrianos, "L'institution de l'exarcate bulgare. Son influence sur les relations interbalkaniques," *Les Balkans*, IX (1939), 56-69.

<sup>24</sup> Davison, *op. cit.*, 134-139.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 188-195; these reforms are summarized in *Accounts and papers*, XCI (1877), No. 1.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

was the Danube *vilayet* which, comprising the former *eyalets* of Silistria, Vidin and Nish, was largely Bulgar and Serb in population. Midhat Pasha was appointed governor of the new province. He was of Pomak, or Moslem Bulgarian, origins and had already made a reputation as one of the most energetic and progressive of Turkish administrators. While to Bulgarians he is known chiefly as a firm opponent of the panslav propaganda and of the revolutionary plans which issued from Bucharest, his accomplishments during the three years of his governorship were noteworthy. The provincial assembly met regularly, although we have no details concerning its deliberations. Agrarian banks were established, a provincial newspaper was published in Ruschuk and able subordinates were appointed. Every effort was made to put into operation the legal and fiscal reforms which had for so long remained a dead letter in the Ottoman law books.<sup>26</sup>

By 1878, European Turkey had been redivided into ten *vilayets* of which five—Danube, Adrianople, Salonica, Bitulya and Yanina—were predominantly Slavic in population. Just where the lines should be drawn between Serb, Macedonian and Bulgar has been a matter of perpetual dispute. In these five provinces the new laws were applied to a greater or lesser extent, and the non-Moslem population was beginning to have a greater share in the conduct of local affairs.<sup>27</sup> Then the great Near Eastern crisis of 1875-1878 swept over the Balkans and ushered in the new order. The law of 1864 was the last of the great reforms before the Balkan revolts of 1875-1876 which culminated in the Russian-Turkish war. While the intervention of the powers on the eve of the war produced no permanent results in terms of administrative changes, the reforms discussed at the Constantinople Conference of 1876-1877 are neverthe-

<sup>26</sup> Davison, *op. cit.*, 195-202.

<sup>27</sup> Bobchev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1936), 9-29.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

less worthy of a brief description as a gauge of the extent to which informed European opinion considered the Bulgarians capable of self-government.

The proposals of the Conference were based on a scheme drawn up by Eugene Schuyler, the American consul general and secretary of legation, and Prince Tseretelev, second secretary of the Russian embassy. This scheme provided for an autonomous province which embraced the territories of what is now Bulgaria and Macedonia. The administrative unit was to be the canton, having a population of 5,000 to 10,000, with a mayor and a cantonal council. This latter institution was the cornerstone of the Schuyler-Tseretelev proposals, for its members were to be elected by all male inhabitants over twenty-one who paid direct taxes. The economic qualification was waived for schoolteachers and the clergy, and all electors were eligible to sit on the council. The Christian governor-general, appointed with the approval of the powers for a five-year term, was in turn advised by a Provincial Assembly elected by the members of the cantonal councils. It was, in short, in all respects a liberal and progressive scheme.<sup>28</sup>

The representatives of the powers in Constantinople were unwilling to go as far as Schuyler and Tseretelev recommended, and various political considerations prevented them from preserving the single autonomous province. The final proposals of the Conference nevertheless bore a striking resemblance to this initial scheme, except for the fact that the original territory was now divided into two provinces. In each province the councils and assembly were retained, although the representative character of these institutions was slightly diminished by raising the voting age to twenty-five years. The essential fiscal and

<sup>28</sup> *Accounts and papers*, XCI (1877), No. 56, inclosure 1; Evelyn Schuyler Schaeffer, *Eugene Schuyler. Memoir and essays* (New York, 1901), 85-92.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

judicial reforms were retained.<sup>29</sup> These proposals were promptly rejected by the Turks, the Conference disbanded and the Eastern crisis moved on toward war.<sup>30</sup>

### THE PENETRATION OF WESTERN IDEAS

It was the flowering of intellectual life in Bulgaria during the four or five generations preceding the liberation which laid the foundations, and at the same time prescribed the limits, of the experiment in constitutional government. Commercial and social contacts with European civilization had reached a low ebb in the seventeenth century and one of the chief characteristics of the period after the beginning of the eighteenth century which constitutes the Bulgarian renaissance was the gradual assimilation by the Balkan province of the habits of thought and aspirations prevalent in the West. The infiltration of these ideas may be explained in some part by the influence of foreign travellers and refugees, missionaries and propagandists. Of far greater importance, however, was the initiative of the native Bulgarians who read foreign books, or went abroad for purposes of education, commerce, or refuge from political persecution. The dominant ideas of the Bulgarian renaissance thus originated in the West, travelling either directly or by way of Russia, the neighboring Balkan countries and the more enlightened parts of the Ottoman Empire.

Of all the foreign groups working to introduce Western ideas into Bulgaria, the American missionaries were probably the most persistent and systematic. After the arrival of the first Methodist and Congregationalist missionaries in 1857 and 1858, respectively, their work grew steadily.

<sup>29</sup> *Accounts and papers*, XCI (1877), Nos. 107, inclosure, and 225, inclosure; Dimitŭr Iotsov, *Graf Ignatiev i nasheto osvobozhdenie* [Count Ignatiev and our liberation] (Sofia, 1939), 93-96.

<sup>30</sup> *Accounts and papers*, XCI (1877), No. 229.



## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Within a few years schools were opened both for boys and girls, and churches were organized. Soon a periodical, at first a monthly but within two years a weekly, was published in the Bulgarian language and distributed by the missionaries. The results of this activity are very difficult to estimate. The missionaries reported the Bulgars to be eager for secular knowledge and education but impervious to the methods of religious revivalism then current in the United States. Not only did the interest in spiritual matters lag, but the tenets of nationalism were so firmly rooted that only a few admitted the possibility of being both a Bulgarian and a Protestant at a time when the Orthodox Church was a symbol of patriotism. To the development of political thought the missionaries contributed only in a general way: their educational work broadened the horizons of many young Bulgarians, but their political teachings were of the most conservative and they raised a warning finger against the radical ideas which were drifting in from Russia.<sup>31</sup>

A very different sort of influence was that of the Poles. A group of two thousand Polish refugees fled to Turkey in 1849 after their unsuccessful uprising in Galicia, and spent a year in the town of Shumen. There they exercised a powerful cultural influence. In a political sense, they were eager missionaries of the ideals of '48 and in addition they contributed a strong flavor of hatred for tsarist Russia.<sup>32</sup> Both the democratic and the monarchist branches of the Polish movement kept up a general interest in the affairs of the Balkan Christians. Prince Czartoryski, in particular, as leader of the monarchists, had plans for independent

<sup>31</sup> William Webster Hall, Jr., *Puritans in the Balkans*. "Studia historico-philologica serdicensia. Supplementi vol. I" (Sofia, 1938), 15-47.

<sup>32</sup> Stiliyan Chilingirov, *Bŭlgarski chitalishta predi osvobozhdenieto. Prinos kŭm istoriyata na bŭlgarskoto vŭzrazhdane* [Bulgarian reading rooms before the liberation. A contribution to the history of the Bulgarian renaissance] (Sofia, 1930), 37-38.



## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

Balkan states under Catholic influence which would serve as a barrier to the Russians. Czartoryski coöperated actively with some of the Bulgarian leaders, and the Poles in general tended to encourage the most extreme hopes of the nationalist movement.<sup>33</sup>

The commercial expansion during the century and a half before the liberation, which has already been described, brought many contacts with the West.<sup>34</sup> Vienna, Constantinople and the Mediterranean region were the most immediate points of contact. In his travels through Bulgaria in the early 1870's Kanitz, the German geographer, saw many evidences of Western influence. He found that the leaders of the rose-oil industry were acquainted with Leipzig and Paris and spoke fluent French.<sup>35</sup> In Karlovo, the textile industry was in touch with Vienna and Paris,<sup>36</sup> and in Sliven a number of the younger businessmen and teachers had been educated in the leading Western and Russian universities.<sup>37</sup> Foreign capital began to find its way into Bulgaria after the Crimean War. It was the textile industry that attracted most attention, and this brought a new contact with the outside world to several of the mountain towns.<sup>38</sup>

Beginning with the school at Gabrovo in 1835, the movement for popular education grew rapidly. It was one of the most significant factors in the Bulgarian renaissance, and

<sup>33</sup> Marcel Handelsman, "La guerre de Crimée, la question polonaise et les origines du problème bulgare," *Revue historique*, CLXIX (1932), 271-315.

<sup>34</sup> See above, 12-14.

<sup>35</sup> F. Kanitz, *Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan. Historisch-geographisch-ethnographische Reisestudien aus den Jahren 1860-1879* (3 vols., 2nd ed.; Leipzig, 1882), I, 241.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 134.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 22; Boyan Penev, *Istoriya na novata bŭlgarska literatura* [The history of modern Bulgarian literature] (4 vols.; Sofia, 1930-36), III, 80-82, mentions some of the early Bulgarian leaders who studied abroad.

<sup>38</sup> Yurdan Yurdanov, "Nachenki na nashata industriya predi osvobozhdenieto" [The beginnings of our industry before the liberation] *Spisanie na bŭlgarskoto ikonomicheshko druzhestvo*, XXXVII (1938), 293.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

most of the schoolteachers were to some extent under the influence of Western ideas.<sup>39</sup> Somewhat later, a movement was successfully launched for the organization of cultural societies and reading rooms. Some of the monastery libraries had survived the Turkish regime, but they did not have much of interest for the younger generation. In the first half of the nineteenth century the best libraries were privately owned and had no wide circulation.<sup>40</sup> The Turkish reform movement and the encroaching cultural activity of the Greeks and Serbs emphasized the need for an adult education movement in Bulgaria, and in 1856 the first reading rooms were opened in Shumen, Lom and Svishtov.<sup>41</sup> These reading rooms were generally associated with cultural societies inspired by national feeling and by a curiosity concerning history, geography and science. Self-improvement and adult education were thus combined with counterpropaganda against the Greek and Serb nationalists. Public lectures, Sunday and holiday schools, theater groups, literary evenings and even commercial enterprises grew out of the reading rooms before the liberation. By 1878, no less than 131 of them had been established in Bulgaria and in Bulgarian settlements abroad, and they contributed greatly to the popularization of a wide variety of current ideas.<sup>42</sup>

The intellectual climate of the Enlightenment, especially as represented by the ideals of the French *philosophes* and encyclopedists popularized by the Revolution, reached Bulgaria in due time through the neighboring regions. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the influence of the Greek schools predominated. Both before and after the Greek war of independence, the Greek schools on the Aegean islands and in such towns as Smyrna, Athens, Salonica and Yanina had many Bulgarians among their

<sup>39</sup> Hajek, *op. cit.*, 137-139.

<sup>40</sup> Chilingirov, *op. cit.*, 29-33.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 51-124; Gandev, *Ranno vŭzrazhdane*, 133-151.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

students. A school on the island of Andros was particularly influential, and enough Slavic students went there to justify the founding of a Bulgarian cultural society. French and Italian literature was studied in these schools in Greek translation, and the general atmosphere of the teaching was secular and enlightened. The Greeks exhibited all of the characteristic features of nationalism, and these were passed on to their less fortunate Slavic brethren, many of whom were thus inspired to work for their own national revival.<sup>43</sup>

During the second third of the century the growing strength and independence of the Serb state exercised an influence which was both political and cultural. This was the period in which ideas of Slavic federation and coöperation against the Turk were current. Several of the prominent Bulgarian leaders were active in Serbia, and came under the influence of Obradović and Karadžić. The schools of Belgrade and Kragujevac opened their doors to many Bulgars who could not afford to go farther West for an education.<sup>44</sup> Those who did go beyond Serbia, however, came into contact with the revival of the Western Slavs. The great upsurge of interest in Slavic history, language and folklore which occupied the Slavic scholars of the Hapsburg monarchy was an integral part of the romantic movement, and they showed some interest in the Balkan branches of their culture. For many Bulgarians, the work of Dobrovský, Kopitar, Hanka and šafařík pointed to the path the Balkan peoples must follow before they could boast of a robust and genuine Slavic tradition.<sup>45</sup> The idea of a scholarly reconstruction of the national tradition, which was so characteristic of the nationalist movement in

<sup>43</sup> Penev, *op. cit.*, III, 83-130; Dimo Minev, "Vliyanie na frenskata kultura vŕhu bŭlgarskata obshtestvenost i literatura" [The influence of French culture on Bulgarian public life and literature], *Godishnik na vissheto tŭrgovsko uchilishte Varna*, VIII (1934-35), 8-12.

<sup>44</sup> Penev, *op. cit.*, III, 131-160.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 161-209.

central Europe during the earlier part of the century, thus found its way to Bulgaria by the most direct geographical route—the Danube valley.

In spite of the many direct contacts of the Bulgarians with Western Europe, the city of Constantinople was more important as a center for the dissemination of Western ideas. A Bulgarian colony of tailors, gardeners and tradesmen grew up in Constantinople, reaching some thirty or forty thousand in number before the liberation. It had its own schools, cultural societies and newspapers, and played a leading role in the winning of ecclesiastical independence. It also came under the influence of the predominantly French character of the great Turkish reform movement, and many of the more promising young men of the colony were sent to the sultan's new *lycée* at Galata Serai or the French Benedictine school in Bebek.<sup>46</sup> This is all the more significant in view of the fact that it was through French culture, more than any other medium, that the achievements of Western civilization were transmitted to the Near East in general and to the Balkans in particular.<sup>47</sup> Another important center of learning in Constantinople was Robert College, an American philanthropic institution. Forty-five Bulgarians completed the course of study before the liberation, and in addition to learning the English language they received instruction in history, political science and parliamentary procedure.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> N. Nachov, "Tsarigrad kato kulturen tsentŭr na bŭlgariŭtŭ do 1877 godina" [Constantinople as a cultural center of the Bulgarians before 1877], *Sbornik na bŭlgarskata akademiya na naukitŭ*, XIX (1925), 1-206; a summary of this material may be found in N. Nachov, "Tsarigrad i bŭlgarskoto vŭzrazhdane" [Constantinople and the Bulgarian renaissance], *Ilarion Makariopolski, Mitropolit Tŭrnovski, 1812-1875*, M. Arnaudov, ed. (2 vols.; Sofia, 1925), II, 113-167; Chilingirov, *op. cit.*, 48-50.

<sup>47</sup> Minev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1934-35), 8-12; Nikola Stanev, "Otrazheniya na frenskata revolyutsiya u nas" [The influence of the French Revolution on us], *Rodina*, I, iv (June, 1939), 87-92; Nicolaï Dontchev, *Influences étrangères dans la littérature bulgare* (Vol. I; Sofia, 1934), I, 81ff.

<sup>48</sup> Nachov, *loc. cit.*, XIX (1925), 153-163; George Washburn, *Fifty years*

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

While the new ideas of the West infiltrated into Bulgaria through all of these diverse channels, their influence for a long time was diffuse rather than concentrated. Most of the leaders in social and economic life had a pretty good idea of the trend of thought in the larger world without, but this knowledge had not yet crystallized into a widely accepted course of action. Only after a large number of Bulgarians began to go to Russia for an education, during the last generation or two before the liberation, was a sufficiently homogeneous body of opinion created to take the leadership in the movement for national independence. Here, again, it was the political thought of the West which overwhelmingly predominated. But this time the ideas had been translated and interpreted by the Russian universities and discussion groups so that they took on a new form which, though it might look somewhat strange to a Westerner, seemed to fit in more readily with the situation in the Balkans.

The beginnings of Russian influence in Bulgaria can be traced well back into the eighteenth century, but it was not until the Russian-Turkish wars of the early nineteenth that relations became close. The commercial and religious bonds grew steadily stronger, while the political ties varied greatly depending on Russia's Near Eastern policy. But few ideas followed in the trail of the Russian armies, and it was 1840 before a systematic attempt was made to bring Bulgarians to Russia. In that year the seminary at Odessa established four annual scholarships for Bulgarian students.<sup>49</sup> Henceforth the stream of students steadily broadened, and it has been estimated that by the time of the liberation no less

*in Constantinople and recollections of Robert College* (Boston and New York, 1909), *passim*; *Catalogue of the officers, graduates and students of Robert College, Constantinople, 1878-1879* (Constantinople, 1879), *passim*.

<sup>49</sup> Iv. D. Shishmanov, "Nachenki ot rusko vliyanie v bulgarskata knizhnina" [The beginnings of Russian influence in Bulgarian literature], *Bulgariski pregled*, V (1899), 117-134.

than five hundred Bulgars had been educated in Russia.<sup>50</sup> The initiative in this activity was taken over by the panslavs, who established their first Slavic Benevolent Committee in Moscow in 1858. Branches of this Slavic Committee were later established in St. Petersburg, Kiev and Odessa, and their aim was "to give aid to the Slavs both by assisting young men to come to Russia to study and by raising funds for schools, churches and literary enterprises."<sup>51</sup>

Russian literature was almost the sole model for young Bulgarian writers before the liberation, and in the later renaissance Pushkin and his successors were widely quoted and imitated.<sup>52</sup> In the realm of ideas, however, the writings of the panslavs did not have much influence on the young men who were brought to Russia. A certain number, it is true, returned to their native land as ardent admirers of Russia. The greater proportion, however, were alienated by the official ideology of the tsarist government. Instead, they read Russian translations of the Western reformers and idealists, and studied the history of the French Revolution, the English Constitution, the Italian *risorgimento* and the German *Einheitsbewegung*. The Russian socialist and nihilist circles were particularly popular with the Bulgarian students, for the struggle against tsarist oppression resembled in many ways that of the Balkan peoples against

<sup>50</sup> B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880* (Oxford, 1937), 112.

<sup>51</sup> K. A. Pushkarevich, "Balkanskije slavyane i russkie 'osvoboditeli' (Slavyanskije komitety i sobytija na Balkanah pered russko-turetskoj vojnõi 1877-1878 gg.)" [The Balkan Slavs and the Russian 'liberators' (The Slavic committees and the events in the Balkans on the eve of the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878)], *Trudy instituta slavyanovedeniya akademii nauk S.S.S.R.*, II (1934), 189; Alfred Fischel, *Der Panlawismus bis zum Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1919), 407-417; Sumner, *op. cit.*, 61-69.

<sup>52</sup> Shishmanov, *loc. cit.*, V (1899), 117-164; K. Krsteff-Miroljuboff, "Die neue bulgarische Literatur," *Internationale Wochenschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik*, III (1909), 109-123, 137-154; Georges Hateau, *Panorama de la littérature bulgare contemporaine* (Paris, 1937), 52-54; Dontchev, *op. cit.*, I, 9-49.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

Turkish rule. The results of the panslav activity were thus quite the opposite of what its leaders had planned. Instead of returning to their native land as missionaries of Russian expansion, the greater part of the Bulgars came back with the fighting ideology of nationalists and radicals whose one aim was to overthrow the Turkish regime. Their constructive ideas for a free Bulgarian state were of the vaguest, but they usually pointed to the neighboring Balkan countries as examples of what they wanted.<sup>53</sup>

### THE TREND OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

THE two great questions discussed by the Bulgarian press and public opinion before the liberation were the attainment of ecclesiastical and of political freedom. It was not so much the ultimate goal which was discussed, for this was to a large extent agreed upon by all concerned. It was rather a question of the means which should be used to attain these ends, the extent to which the national leaders should attempt to compromise with the Greek patriarchate and the Turkish government, and the reliance which should be placed on foreign, and particularly on Russian aid. These were the issues which divided the leaders of the national renaissance whenever the time for action arose, and the principles and points of view involved were much the same as those which came up for discussion during the Constitutional Assembly of 1879.

The discussion of public issues was a comparatively recent phenomenon in Bulgarian society, and the great pre-liberation controversies were in fact confined to the period between the Crimean War and the April revolution of

<sup>53</sup> Shishmanov, *loc. cit.*, V (1899), 164-171; Sumner, *op. cit.*, 110-117; G. Bakalov, "Russkaya revolyutsionnaya emigratsiya sredi bolgar. I. Do osvobozhdeniya Bolgarii" [Russian revolutionary émigrés among the Bulgarians. I. Before the liberation of Bulgaria], *Katorga i ssylka*, LXIII (1930), 114-137; G. Bakalov, "Chernyshevskii na Balkanah" [Chernyshevski in the Balkans], *Katorga i ssylka*, CXIII (1934), 27-31.



## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

1876. The private correspondence of the public leaders, which formed almost the only means of communicating information and ideas before 1840, dealt largely with questions of philology, national history and the problem of establishing schools. Even the early newspapers, such as the *Lyuboslovie* (Philology) of K. G. Fotinov (Smyrna, 1842, 1844-1846), the *Bŭlgarski orel* (Bulgarian eagle) of Iv. Bogorov (Leipzig, 1846-1847) and the *Tsarigradski vĕstnik* (Constantinople newspaper) of Iv. Bogorov and A. S. Ekzarh (Constantinople, 1848-1861) were largely didactic in character, although it has been suggested that the publication by the last-named paper of a translation of Napoleon III's Constitution of 1852 was meant as a reminder to the Turks of their duty to their Christian subjects. The *Mirozrenie* (World outlook), of which several issues were published in Vienna by Iv. Dobrovski in 1850-1851, took some interest in political matters and expressed the hope that the Bulgarians might eventually be granted rights similar to those of the Slavs in Austria-Hungary.<sup>54</sup>

The struggle for ecclesiastical independence was a long and intricate one and many of the issues accompanying it concerned which of the European powers should be enlisted in the struggle, rather than any problems involving political principles. The question of the Uniates, for instance, whose cause was led by D. Tsankov with his *Bŭlgariya* (1859-1863), aroused a great deal of controversy among church circles in Constantinople, but it remained largely a matter of tactics rather than of principles. Of greater importance for this study was the conflict between the radical and moderate wings of the Bulgarian group in Constantinople which took the initiative in prosecuting the church question. The radical wing was led by St.

<sup>54</sup> B. M. Andreev, *Bŭlgarskiyat pečat prez vŭzrazhdaneto* (*Zachenki i razvoŭi*) [The Bulgarian press during the renaissance (Origins and development)] (Sofia, 1932), 22-50, 157-168.



Chomakov, who received the journalistic support of both P. R. Slaveïkov's *Gaiđa* (Bagpipe, 1863-1867) and *Makedoniya* (Macedonia, 1868-1872), and of N. Genovich's *Turtsiya* (Turkey, 1864-1873), as well as of the revolutionary Rakovski and the Bucharest committee with its plan of dualism. The idea of these diverse groups was that there should be no attempt to compromise with the Greek patriarchate and that the Bulgarian church should immediately declare itself independent.

The guilds, the younger clergy, and many of the Bulgarian residents of Constantinople also backed this view, which met with the favor of the Turkish government, especially after the Cretan revolt of 1866 when it was no longer interested in supporting Greek interests in Bulgaria. The moderate group was led by Ilarion Makariopolski, G. Krūstevich and T. Burmov with his *Vrěmya* (Times, 1865-1867), and was content with a gradual and evolutionary development of its demands. It preferred a compromise with the Greek patriarchate, and was willing to begin with a reform in the school system and to wait until a more favorable opportunity arose for further concessions. In the end, however, events took such a turn that a complete break with the patriarchate was found necessary. The split on this particular issue was significant in indicating that some of the leaders were willing to go a good deal farther than others in achieving what both sides agreed to be the national aims.<sup>55</sup>

While the Bulgarian leaders within the Turkish empire were occupied with the church question, it was left for the émigrés in Bucharest, Odessa, Vienna, Belgrade and other cities to discuss the problems of political reform and to lay

<sup>55</sup> Andreev, *op. cit.*, 61-73; Nikov, *op. cit.*, 181-182, 238; R. Slaveïkov, *Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827-1895-1927. Oчерk na zhivota mu i spomeni za nego* [Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827-1895-1927. A sketch of his life and recollections of him] (Sofia, 1927), 34.

plans for a future independent Bulgarian state. The idea that they must win their right to exist independent of Greek and Turkish oppression was the doctrine which had been successfully preached by such pioneers of Bulgarian nationalism as Paisiĭ, Spiridon and Sofroniĭ, and this new outlook had met its greatest success in the field of educational and ecclesiastical reform. But it remained for the younger leaders to advance to the point where they could discuss the possibility of an independent Bulgaria and even of a Danubian confederation.<sup>56</sup>

As in the case of the church question, the movement for political reform found the leaders of public opinion split into two groups. The older men were more willing to seek a compromise with the Turks and would have been satisfied with a substantial autonomy for the Bulgarian provinces within the framework of the Ottoman system. The younger leaders, on the other hand, demanded nothing less than independence. While no sharp geographical line can be drawn between these two points of view, the Bulgarian colony in Constantinople was considered the headquarters of the more conservative group. The tailors and merchants formed a prosperous community which was dependent on good relations with the government. Also, living close to the center of authority and carrying some weight in influential circles, the leaders of the Bulgarian colony were doubtless aware that many opportunities were beginning to open up for a more progressive administration of the empire.<sup>57</sup>

While not actually a member of the Constantinople colony, Naĭden Gerov was in many ways typical of the conservative leaders. After receiving his education in Odessa in the 1840's, he returned to Bulgaria as a schoolteacher. The Crimean War again took him to Russia for a short

<sup>56</sup> Hajek, *op. cit.*, 120-140; Nikov, *op. cit.*, 19-24.

<sup>57</sup> Nachov, *loc. cit.*, XIX, 180-181.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

time, but he came back in 1856 to serve for twenty years as Russian vice-consul in Plovdiv, where he made a name for himself as a leader of the cultural renaissance. The very fact that he could work for a national revival without at the same time demanding a revolution marked him as a conservative. He struggled valiantly against Greek influence in southern Bulgaria, worked for ecclesiastical independence and laid the foundations of a national literary tradition. He even corresponded with some of the revolutionaries, but he never placed any faith in a popular Bulgarian uprising.<sup>58</sup>

Another typical conservative leader was Seliminski. A man of broad culture and experience, and one who prided himself in being a realist, he placed his faith in the energy of the national will. He saw that neither Turkey nor the great powers would go out of their way to help Bulgaria, and that the partition of the Ottoman Empire would only leave his country at the mercy of its neighbors. The aim of its leaders, therefore, should not be a military uprising but a reasonable compromise with the more enlightened Turkish statesmen. The Bulgarians would thus attain a position of administrative autonomy and achieve their national fulfillment without risks and bloodshed. As with all of the moderates, the church struggle represented to Seliminski precisely the sort of nationalist activity in which they could profitably engage. It also marked the limits of achievement beyond which it would be dangerous to venture.<sup>59</sup>

Surveying the European scene after the Crimean War, in his *Policy of Russia and of the Great Powers*,<sup>60</sup> Seliminski

<sup>58</sup> Todor Panchev, *Naïden Gerov. Sto godini ot rozhdenieto mu 1823-1923. Kâsi cherti ot zhivota i deïnostta mu* [Naïden Gerov. A hundred years since his birth, 1823-1923. A brief sketch of his life and career] (Sofia, 1923), 16-26.

<sup>59</sup> M. Arnaudov, *Seliminski. Zhivot-dëlo-idei, 1799-1867* [Seliminski. Life, work and ideas. 1799-1867] (Sofia, 1938), 486-508.

<sup>60</sup> *Politikata na Rusiya i na velikitë dърzhavi* (1859).

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

pointed with scorn to the unrest caused by the revolutions of 1848. He referred to the dangerous ideas of "communism, socialism, social democracy, demo-monarchism, and constitutional imperialism" as "the utopias of exalted heads."<sup>61</sup> It was in solid and conservative Russia that he saw Bulgaria's true friend and defender. Only under Russia's aegis was he willing to contemplate Bulgaria's breaking with the Turks and joining some sort of a Slavic confederation.<sup>62</sup>

If Constantinople was the base of operations of the conservatives, it was in Bucharest that the more extreme Bulgarian émigrés began increasingly to congregate. It was located beyond the reach of the Turkish police, and yet close enough to serve as a base for the raiding expeditions which were expected to arouse the Bulgarians to revolt. Here the Secret Bulgarian Central Committee was founded in 1866 with the support of the Rumanian authorities who, after the overthrow of Prince Cuza, needed it as a means of keeping the Turks busy at home.<sup>63</sup> And here the Central Revolutionary Committee was established in 1872.<sup>64</sup> But Bucharest did not have a large and flourishing Bulgarian community such as that in Constantinople, and harbored no group with a continuous policy. The point of view of the extremists, who were chiefly responsible for the development of political thought during the Bulgarian renaissance, must be sought in the writings of the individual revolutionaries.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Arnaudov, *Seliminski*, 524.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 529-533.

<sup>63</sup> Pavel N. Orëshkov, "Ruska dŕzhavna prepiska po nasheto osvoboditelno dvizhenie (1866-1868)" [Russian official correspondence concerning our liberation movement, 1866-1868], *Spisanie na bŭlgarskata akademiya na naukite*, LII (1935), 255-328.

<sup>64</sup> Ivan Stoyanov, *Borbi za politicheska nezavisimost* [Struggles for political independence] (Sofia, 1931), 93ff.; Vangel K. Sugareff, "The Constitution of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee," *Journal of modern history*, IV (1932), 572-580.

Of the émigré leaders, the first and in many ways the most far-sighted was Georgi Stoïkov Rakovski. Born in 1821 in the mountain town of Kotel, and of a family noted for its active opposition to Turkish rule, Rakovski first distinguished himself as the leader of a revolt in Braila in 1842. He was sentenced to death by the Rumanian government, but escaped to Marseilles where he remained for a year and a half, returning to Kotel only to be turned over to the authorities by the *chorbajis*. After spending three years in a Constantinople jail, he retired to a prosperous life in business until the Crimean War again aroused him to activity. His first reactions, expressed in a poem published in Novi Sad, were quite mild. While he welcomed Russia's initiative in fighting the Turk, he realized that none of the European empires were interested in a free Bulgaria and that to seek their aid would only mean domination by them. The best solution, then, was to get a working agreement with the Turks and to concentrate on reforms in education, agriculture and government.

By 1857, however, he had changed his views and in his famous poem *Gorski pūtnik* (Forest traveller) he called for a revolution against Turkish rule. This was the classical uprising of the Christian peoples which would bring Russia to their aid with the Western powers looking on with benevolent sympathy. Always a refugee, he arrived in Belgrade in 1860 and was soon publishing his *Dunavski lebed* (Danube swan) in which he took up arms over the church question and directed his attacks against both the Russians and the Greeks without, however, softening in his attitude towards the Turks. At this time his chief interest was in forming a Bulgarian legion to aid Michael Obrenović in his quarrel with the Turks. In his letters to one of his friends he expressed his characteristic view that in the complicated state of European diplomacy in the Eastern Question, where each imperialist power was out for what

it could get, Bulgaria must be prepared to take advantage of any opportunity offered by the rapidly changing situation. To avoid being implicated in the Russian and Greek policies, he urged that his country sever all connections with the Greek Orthodox Church and if necessary invent a religion of its own. He also included a prophetic statement when he remarked that "However much we may try to convince Europe that we are not attached to Russia, we meet with no success. This idea has become fixed in their minds."<sup>65</sup>

Rakovski left no specific plans for a future Bulgarian government, although one undocumented source reports him to have said in 1867 that he favored a prince elected from one of the leading royal families of Western Europe. In his *Dunavski lebed* he laid great emphasis on Bulgaria's national rights and insisted that they be guaranteed. The European states he classified as absolute and constitutional. He preferred the latter type, in which he included France and Italy. In these countries, he said, the popular constitutional monarchs were the fathers of their people and the moderate governments guaranteed civil liberties and preserved order. Rakovski also advocated friendly relations with Rumania and Serbia, although he saw no hope of coöperating with Greece until she had given up her ideas of panhellenism. Disappointed with the refusal of Serbia to help the Bulgarian cause after she had settled her dispute with Turkey, Rakovski went to Bucharest, where he died in 1867. By his successors he was considered the pioneer of the political revolutionaries, although they added to his

<sup>65</sup> M. Arnaudov, "Politicheskite idei na Rakovski" [The political ideas of Rakovski], *Rodina*, I (1938), 5-15; M. Arnaudov, "G. S. Rakovski," *Bŭlgarski pisатели* (6 vols.; Sofia, 1929-30), II, 3-30; B. Mintses, "Dŭrzhavno-politichnite i sotsialnostopanskite idei v bŭlgarskata doosvoboditelna literatura. Kritikobibliografska studiya" [Political, social and economic ideas in Bulgarian pre-liberation literature. A critical and bibliographical study], *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniya, nauka i knizhnina*, XVI-XVII (1900), 8.

doctrines the teachings of the French and Russian revolutionary writers.<sup>66</sup>

Lyuben Karavelov took up many of Rakovski's ideas and became his successor as leader of the revolutionary movement. Born of a prominent family of Koprivishtitsa in 1837, he studied in Philippopolis before going on to Moscow where he spent nine years (1857-1867). There he came under the influence of Herten, Chernyshevski, Dobrolybov and Pisarev, and also of Aksakov, the panslav leader. After a year in Belgrade Karavelov finally arrived in Bucharest, which was henceforth to be the center of his revolutionary activities. At that time the leading organ of the radical movement was the *Narodnost* (Nationality, 1867-1869), which placed no hope either in Turkish reform or in Serbian aid. It considered the churchmen in Constantinople too slow and cautious, and opposed the gentry with indiscriminating violence. However, both the *Narodnost* and Voïnikov's *Dunavska zora* (Danube dawn, 1867-1870) were willing to consider the proposals for a dualistic system brought forward by the moderate groups, led by P. Kisimov and his *Otechestvo* (Fatherland, 1869-1871). Presented to the sultan in 1867, this plan was patterned after the Austrian *Ausgleich* and provided Bulgaria with an autonomous administrative system and a democratic national assembly. The sultan himself would serve as king, and the plan would have the advantage of uniting all the Bulgarians under Turkish rule at a time when the neighboring Balkan countries were planning to extend their frontiers at the expense of Bulgaria. The *Narodnost* was in favor of a moderate application of this idea, although it came out against a

<sup>66</sup> Arnaudov, "Politicheskitë idei na Rakovski," *Rodina*, I (1938), 15-23; G. Bakalov, "Russkaya revoliutsionnaya emigratsiya sredi bolgar. I. Do osvobozhdeniya bolgarii" [Russian revolutionary émigrés among the Bulgarians. I. Before the liberation of Bulgaria], *Katorga i ssylka*, LXIII (1930), 115; L. S. Stavrianos, "The first Balkan alliance system, 1860-1876," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, II (1942), 267-290.

version submitted in 1868 to a conference sitting in Paris on the Cretan question, which advocated a national assembly based on a system of indirect voting. It was in this connection that the question of a bicameral assembly first arose, and a division of opinion immediately occurred as to whether this was a democratic means of representation.<sup>67</sup>

But Karavelov was true to the revolutionary tradition and refused to place any reliance on a plan which depended for its success on coöperation with the Turks. In its stead, he substituted a plan for a Balkan federation which was the natural outgrowth of Rakovski's attempt to coöperate with the Serbs. Karavelov's Bulgaria included Thrace and Macedonia, but he was willing to grant Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro to Serbia, and Thessaly and Epirus to Greece. There was to be a small Albania, Rumania would remain unchanged and Constantinople would be a free city. With the expected collapse of Austria-Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia and the Banat would go to Serbia, and the North Banat, Erdel and Transylvania to Rumania. Within this confederation, which was to push the Turks entirely out of Europe, Bulgaria, Serbia and Rumania were to be in especially close alliance, with a common parliament but with separate executive and administrative branches. These ideas he discussed in his *Svoboda* (Liberty, 1869-1873) and his *Nezavisimost* (Independence, 1873-1874), stating his case in terms which envisaged a liberal and even a socialist order. The federalist plan as a whole was the result partly of his great distrust of everything Turkish, and partly of his realistic view of European politics. "In these times," he said, "when the European powers range in size of population from fifty to seventy millions, the small peoples must either

<sup>67</sup> G. Konstantinov, "Lyuben Karavelov," *Bŭlgarski pisateli*, III, 3-36; Dimitŭr T. Strashimirov, *Istoriya na aprilskoto vŭzstanie* [History of the April revolt] (3 vols.; Plovdiv, 1907), I, 21-24; Stoyanov, *Borbi*, 71-74; Andreev, *op. cit.*, 106-116; Mintses, *loc. cit.*, XVI-XVII (1900), 8-13; Hajek, *op. cit.*, 231-233; Orŕshkov, *loc. cit.*, LII (1935), 255-328.



## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

submit to a large power and surrender their historical existence, or they must unite with other peoples on a most liberal basis (as in the unions of Switzerland and America) and thus form a defensive federation." And again, "Freedom is not given, it is won. . . . Not a single cabinet will help us if we do not help ourselves. . . . Our salvation is in the Danubian federation."<sup>68</sup>

Implicit in this plan, which placed such great reliance on the coöperative efforts of the Balkan countries, was a fear of Russian domination. It is a characteristic still prevalent in the Balkans that the abler members of the younger generation are quite willing to accept fellowships and live for many years in foreign countries without feeling obligated to further the imperialist aims of their benefactors when they return to their native country. Of the prominent revolutionaries, Karavelov, Botïov and Stambolov all went to Russia on fellowships and returned with an admiration for Russian literature and a fear of Russian domination in the Balkans. Thus, in the case of Karavelov, it was the nihilists rather than the panslavs whose ideas he adopted. As he said in his *Svoboda* in 1870, "If Russia comes to liberate, she will be met with great sympathy; but if she comes to rule she will find many enemies. . . ."<sup>69</sup> This fear of Russian rule was due in part to the general distaste for her absolutism which so many who had lived in Russia as students acquired, and partly to the influence of the Polish émigrés. It is here, also, that one can see the influence of Bakunin, whom Karavelov visited in Switzerland in 1870. The contribution of the great anarchist was in broadening the outlook of the Bulgarian revolutionaries by incorporating their particular aims in the Balkans into

<sup>68</sup> Konstantinov, "Lyuben Karavelov," *Bŭlgarski pisатели*, III, 44-45; Andreev, *op. cit.*, 116-123; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 39-41; Mintses, *loc. cit.*, XVI-XVII (1900), 11-12.

<sup>69</sup> Mintses, *loc. cit.*, XVI-XVII (1900), 17.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

a broad program of Slavic federation combined with a social egalitarianism which dispelled the fear of Russian domination. It was a happy dream of which Karavelov approved, but he did not let it interfere with his more practical plans for Bulgaria's future.<sup>70</sup>

Lyuben Karavelov's views as to the proper form of government for Bulgaria were democratic in the best sense of the term. It was indeed typical of him and of his colleagues that, while they corresponded with and quoted the leading revolutionaries of Russia and Western Europe, they interpreted their theories largely in the light of Bulgarian conditions. The bourgeois oppressors of the proletariat were not landlords and industrialists, but *chorbajis*, Greek priests and Turkish governors. It was thus possible for Karavelov to represent himself sincerely as a supporter of Bakunin's uprising of Slavic peoples, and at the same time to point to the United States, Switzerland and Belgium as having the forms of government which Bulgaria should copy.

He thought of the Bulgarian people as being held down by two forms of oppression: the first was the political oppression of the Turkish government and the Greek patriarchate, and the second was the spiritual oppression of the ignorance and stupidity of the people. Political freedom must be obtained by revolution, and only then would it be possible to free the spirits of the people by means of education. Like Chernyshevski he placed great reliance on education, which he hoped would bring the end of all evil and inequality. Borrowed from many sources, and frequently distorted to fit the needs of the Bulgarian peasant rather than the French or Russian proletariat, it is difficult

<sup>70</sup> Bakalov, *loc. cit.*, LXIII (1930), 115-120; Mintsès, *loc. cit.*, XVI-XVII (1900), 14-18; Marcel Handelsman, "La guerre de Crimée, la question polonaise et les origines du problème bulgare," *Revue historique*, CLXIX (1932), 271-315; E. H. Carr, *Michael Bakunin* (London, 1937), 448; V. Bogucharskii, *Aktivnoe narodnichestvo semidesyatykh godov* [Active populism in the 1870's] (Moscow, 1912), 275-277, 292-293.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

to identify the origin of Karavelov's ideas. The emphasis on liberty and equality is always present, however, and he could rely on the warm response of his readers when he proclaimed his loyalty to these ideals. "Look at Switzerland and America," he once wrote, "and you will see that human happiness depends not on a scepter and a throne, not on a crown and a monarchy, but on complete human freedom."<sup>71</sup>

That Karavelov was dominated by the characteristic views of a Western nationalist and liberal may be seen from the statute of the Central Revolutionary Committee in Bucharest, which he edited in 1872. Individual liberty, national independence and human rights are all mentioned as ideals for which the true revolutionary is willing to die. The enemies of the national ideal must be relentlessly persecuted.<sup>72</sup> He retired from active participation in the revolutionary movement in 1874, discouraged by the failure of his efforts to produce a national revolution, and died five years later of tuberculosis. But to the end Karavelov remained a firm adherent of the more advanced views of his generation. "The modern age," he once said, "is only interested in knowing what de Tocqueville, Buckle, Draper and Strauss, Vogt, Darwin, Huxley and Humboldt have to say—it is interested in the political sciences, and not in the inanities of Tasso and Fénelon."<sup>73</sup>

It was Hristo Botiöv who took up the banner relinquished by the tired and disillusioned Karavelov in 1874. The son of a schoolteacher of Kalofer, Botiöv was sent to Odessa on a scholarship in 1863 at the early age of fifteen. His career as a scholar was brief and stormy, and his main efforts were directed to absorbing the ideas of the Polish émigrés and studying the writings of the nihilists. In 1867

<sup>71</sup> Konstantinov, "Lyuben Karavelov, *Bŭlgarski pisатели*, III, 44-45; Carr, *Bakunin*, 156-160, 167-180; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 39-41.

<sup>72</sup> Stanev, *loc. cit.*, I (1938-39), 90; Sugareff, *loc. cit.*, IV (1932), 573.

<sup>73</sup> Shishmanov, *loc. cit.*, V (1899), 169; Hajek, *op. cit.*, 245; Stoyanov, *Borbi*, 102.

he went to Braila where he spent two years on the staff of Voïnikov's *Dunavska zora*, and busied himself with general revolutionary activity. For the next several years he aided Karavelov in Bucharest, taught school in Ismail, and brought out the five issues of his first revolutionary paper in Braila, the *Duma na bŭlgarskiti emigranti* (The word of the Bulgarian emigrants, 1871). His basic adherence to the tradition of Rakovski and Karavelov is made clear in this publication, and he made no secret of his belief in revolution as the only means to political freedom. As regards the Balkan federation, he supported the idea on principle but urged great caution lest Bulgaria's neighbors take advantage of her weak position to satisfy their own territorial ambitions. He believed that the idea of a federation was excellent but that the absolute equality of all the participants had to be preserved, for "The Prussian is a German and the Piedmontese an Italian, but a Bulgarian is not a Serb, nor is a Serb a Russian."<sup>74</sup>

Botŭov differed from his predecessors in that he was more of a social revolutionary. Far more a practical organizer than a political theorist, he was able to agree with Proudhon and Bakunin that government was a conspiracy against the freedom of man, since he saw the Turks as the government and the Bulgarians as the governed. He also embraced the populism of Chernyshevski and the nihilism of Pisarev, for to him they both bore the same message: that the Bulgarian people must be freed from Turkish rule. In the *Zname* (Banner, 1874-1875), which he published in Bucharest after the discontinuation of Karavelov's *Nezavisimost*, Botŭov ably combined the social doctrine with the political. He opposed the whole conduct of the church struggle, and identified the *chorbajis* completely with the Turkish system. If Karavelov pointed to the United States and Switzer-

<sup>74</sup> Andreev, *op. cit.*, 127-130; Lyudmil Stoyanov, "Hristo Botŭov," *Bŭlgarski pisатели*, III, 65-88; Bogucharskiŭ, *op. cit.*, 292-293.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

land in approval of the democratic republics which they represented, Botïov preferred a socialist republic of a rather utopian nature and could point to no specific examples of what he meant. The Paris commune aroused his enthusiasm for a while, and he spent some time organizing communes among the Bulgarian colonies in Rumania before his energies were distracted by the more immediate problem of fighting the Turk.<sup>75</sup> Botïov was not acquainted with Marxian socialism, however, and one cannot avoid the feeling that his adoption of anarchism and utopian socialism served more as an inspiration in his struggle against the Turks than as a plan for the future government of Bulgaria. After his brief career as leader of the revolution, Botïov was killed fighting the Turks in the spring of 1875.<sup>76</sup>

Aside from the three great leaders of Bulgarian revolutionary ideology, Rakovski, Karavelov and Botïov, there are few individuals to whom one can point as having discussed in any detail the relative merits of the various forms of political organization among which Bulgaria might, in the near future, have to choose. Books were published on commercial and civil law, banking, anthropology, cooking and political economy, but they were largely adaptations from foreign works and contained little that was original. Questions such as the development of railways, the formation of stock companies and free trade received some attention, but they were not problems which demanded any immediate solution. It is important to realize, however, that there was a great interest in these matters and that the reading public was eager to learn about them insofar as they affected Bulgaria.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> See above, 15-16; Klincharov, *op. cit.*, I, 11-16.

<sup>76</sup> Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 41-50; Stoyanov, *Borbi*, 104-106; Stoyanov, "Hristo Botïov," *Bûlgarski pisатели*, III, 88-114; Bakalov, *loc. cit.*, LXIII (1930), 120-122; Andreev, *op. cit.*, 130-136.

<sup>77</sup> Mintses, *loc. cit.*, XVI-XVII (1900), 26-28, 31-52, 57-58.

A more subtle indication of the views widely held may be found in the works of the great popular poet of the time, Petko Rachov Slaveïkov (1827-1895). He had received little formal education, and his acquaintance with foreign political writers was restricted largely to the Serbian rationalists and the Russian romanticists, but his intimate knowledge of his country and his people through many years of travel and teaching made him the spokesman of the illiterate peasant and the smaller townsman. Although his main theme before the liberation was the oppression of the Greek and the Turk, he was by no means willing to follow the leadership provided by the churchmen in Constantinople. He favored a complete break with the patriarchate, and insisted that no reform, whether in religion, education or politics, was of any value unless it reflected the popular will. Many of the more moderate leaders, he felt, were not well enough acquainted with what the people really wanted and were willing to compromise with the Greeks at a time when the will of the people decreed otherwise. He agreed with the revolutionary leaders that education was the ultimate necessity if they were to eradicate the faults bred by the long Turkish rule: lack of initiative, submissiveness, cowardice and egotism. He went even further than his colleagues when, in 1860, he published a pamphlet advocating education for women. The point of view expressed by Slaveïkov was thus essentially democratic in a social sense, and after the liberation he was resolute in supporting these same ideas in the political sphere.<sup>78</sup>

Until the very eve of the revolution of 1876, the influ-

<sup>78</sup> Boris Īotsov, "Petko Rachev Slaveïkov," *Bŭlgarski pisатели*, II, 120-171; Slaveïkov, *Petko Rachov Slaveïkov*, 5-34; Penev, *op. cit.*, IV, 464-465, 476-477; An Eastern Statesman, "The new Bulgaria," *The contemporary review*, XXXV (1879), 516, takes a similar stand when he cites as an important Bulgarian characteristic the adherence to "... the idea of social equality and equal rights . . ."; a somewhat more pessimistic view is expressed in John Beddoe, "On the Bulgarians," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, VIII (1879), 232-239.

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

ence of liberal and radical political ideas was considerable. Stefan Stambolov, the future dictator, continued the *Nova Bŭlgariya* (1876-1877) in Gyurgevo after Botŭfov's death and, as a former member of Kovalski's nihilist circle in Odessa, was preparing to educate his fellow countrymen by translating Chernyshevski's *Chto delat* when the revolution interrupted his plans. Likewise in the revolutionary spirit were K. Tuleshkov's *Bălgarski glas* (Voice of Bulgaria, 1876-1877), published in Bolgrad, and Sv. Milarov's *Vŭzrazhdane* (Renaissance, 1876), which he published in Braila. More serious and thoughtful was the *Stara planina* (1877-1878), published in Bucharest under the editorship of S. S. Bobchev, with the collaboration of Gr. Nachevich and Iv. Vazov. Bobchev agreed with the more radical leaders that it was useless to place any reliance on reforms under the Turkish rule. It was his hope that, when the Christian peoples were freed from Turkish rule by the intervention of the powers, an independent state comprising Bulgaria, Thrace and Macedonia would be set up and governed under an organic statute. He conceded equal rights for minorities and freedom of conscience for all. The introduction of compulsory military service and education would serve to consolidate the national spirit of the new state.<sup>79</sup> With the outbreak of the April revolt in 1876, all discussion of political problems ceased and the leaders threw themselves into the struggle against Turkish rule. It was not until two years later, when the country was under the rule of the Russian provisional government, that free discussion was again possible.

### CONCLUSION

It has frequently been charged that when the Bulgarian people assumed the responsibilities of self-government in 1878 they were totally innocent of any experience in the

<sup>79</sup> Bakalov, *loc. cit.*, LXIII (1930), 126-127; Andreev, *op. cit.*, 136-142.

proper conduct of public affairs.<sup>80</sup> The preceding summary of certain aspects of the Bulgarian renaissance shows that these assertions greatly misrepresent the nature of the situation.

In the actual responsibilities of political and administrative offices, it is true, the Ottoman system of government offered few opportunities even for the best prepared citizens. The village councils of elders were competent to deal with certain local matters, but their range was strictly limited. Likewise the Turkish administrative reforms, even the *vilayet* system of 1864, altered the situation only in a small degree, for the Turkish reformers were more interested in ferreting out corruption and injustice than in sharing their political power. Certain positive benefits did nevertheless result from the Turkish reforms. A number of Bulgarians rose to prominence as Turkish officials, and many more served in the lower ranks. Even when they brought no immediate benefits, the new laws stimulated sufficient interest so that in 1873 the Ottoman legal code was translated into Bulgarian.<sup>81</sup> Finally, the reforms contributed indirectly by giving new responsibilities to the guilds and to the church.

It was in these institutions that the Bulgarians developed the political habits which in a large degree characterized the public administration of their country after the liberation. The guild system, for instance, was itself a school for future statesmen and administrators. It has been maintained that the whole Bulgarian renaissance was in essence the effort of the artisan and merchant classes to overthrow the inefficient Turkish rule which prevented them from carrying on their trades and businesses in a profitable

<sup>80</sup> Edward Dicey, *The peasant state. An account of Bulgaria in 1894* (London, 1894), 120-121; William Miller, *Travel and politics in the Near East* (London, 1898), 465; and Washburn, *Fifty years*, 147, represent typical statements of this point of view.

<sup>81</sup> Bobchev, *loc. cit.*, VIII (1936), 27-29.



fashion. It was these groups who backed the national movements for educational reform and ecclesiastical independence as a means of obtaining a certain amount of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. At the same time the guilds offered experience, on a small scale, in voting, banking, public meetings and other forms of responsibility for the public welfare. In a similar fashion, the charter of the independent church placed all secular matters under the jurisdiction of lay councils.<sup>82</sup>

The church struggle provided political experience of a somewhat broader nature. The long negotiations with the Turkish government and the Greek patriarchate brought the lay and ecclesiastical leaders into contact with most of the influential personalities in Constantinople. The necessity for coöperative action, the debates over policy in the émigré press and church councils, and the growth of conflicting parties were all a part of the church struggle. The experience acquired during this long crusade, and the statesmanship exhibited in its conduct, differed in no fundamental way from the political experience and statesmanship required in the ordinary administration of governmental affairs. It may even be said that few statesmen of liberated Bulgaria showed as much ability and wisdom in facing political issues as did these early leaders.

The proposals agreed to by the powers at the Constantinople Conference in 1876 indicate that the Western diplomats who had had some experience in the Near East considered the Balkan Slavs ready for a large measure of autonomy. It is true that these proposals were based on no careful examination of the problem and that the diplomats frequently had ulterior motives in making the recommendations which they did, yet it is worth noting that the

<sup>82</sup> Stanev, *loc. cit.*, IV (1931), 167-168; Natan, *op. cit.*, I, 161-171; André Girard, "L'évolution et les tendances actuelles de la démocratie bulgare," *Revue d'histoire politique et constitutionnelle*, II (1938), 106-107.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Constitution of 1879 differed only in degree from the Schuyler-Tseretelev charter. What was lacking in Bulgaria's political experience was not so much a technical knowledge of law and administration, as the restraint, subtlety and sense of responsibility which can be acquired only after generations of experience in the delicate art of politics.

Another result of the experiences of the last generation before 1878 was the national self-reliance bred by a distrust of the great powers. One of the major differences between the moderates and the extremists was that while the former trusted no foreign power but Russia, the latter did not even expect the tsar's policy to bring them any intentional benefits. The Balkan Christians had for so long been a pawn of power politics that all of their leaders, after a period of deep disillusionment following the Crimean War, became quite cynical regarding international affairs. This attitude remained a permanent feature of Bulgarian policy after the liberation, and it explains the instability and opportunism of the relations between the political leaders and the imperialist agents during the establishment of the constitutional system.

While the gradual amelioration of conditions under Turkish rule contributed materially to the political maturity of the Bulgarian people, it was the penetration of Western ideas which largely determined the nature and scope of the constitutional struggle during the first years of independence. Reading, and frequently misinterpreting, the liberal and radical tradition of Western political thought, the advocates of Bulgarian independence discovered a wealth of arguments which showed that political oppression contradicted both nature and reason. That the majority of the leaders had received their education in Russia was also important, for there many of the doctrines of liberalism were stamped with a fanaticism which distorted them almost beyond recognition. When the progressive thought

## *The Social and Intellectual Background*

of Western Europe appeared on the Bulgarian scene it was in an extreme and doctrinaire form calculated to offset the reactionary principles of tsar or sultan.

At the same time the more moderate leaders, who were on the whole the more responsible, learned a different lesson from the West. They learned to distrust popular movements and to caution against a too hasty change from subjection to self-government. They respected and admired the constitutional regimes of the West, but for their own country they felt that an agreement with the Turks was more likely to produce concrete results. The differences between the moderates and the extremists characterized all of the pre-liberation controversies, and in the constitutional struggle they appeared again as a major issue. That the extremists in the end determined the nature of the constitution was the result of the Near Eastern crisis of 1875-1878. The moderates had staked their position on a compromise with the Turks, and the war of independence destroyed their prestige in the popular mind. The extremists, on the other hand, had always preached war and revolution and, even if the small revolts inspired by their teaching brought no immediate results, they were catapulted into power by the Russian victory which they helped to prepare.

## CHAPTER III. THE PREPARATION OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE

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### THE RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATION OF BULGARIA, 1877-1878

LEAVING aside for the time being the question of the motives and intentions of the Russian government in undertaking the campaign against Turkey in 1877 and her ultimate plans for the reorganization of the Balkan peninsula,<sup>1</sup> it is necessary to examine briefly her administrative policy in Bulgaria during the period of occupation, before going on to a more detailed consideration of the preparations made for the elaboration of a permanent form of government by the Assembly of Notables under the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin.

The problem of administering Bulgaria after it had been conquered was faced by the Russians in the first days of the war, and before their troops crossed the Danube plans had been elaborated for the civil administration of all the Christians under Turkish rule. To take charge of this problem, the emperor appointed Prince V. A. Cherkaskii, a man of wide knowledge of economic and administrative problems who had gained experience both in the settlement of the serf question and in the reorganization of Poland after the revolution of 1863. As a leading panslav, he had aroused a great deal of antagonism in Poland by his program of Russification, but in his general approach to administrative affairs he was considered a liberal and is said to have been favorably impressed with Alexis de Tocqueville's description of democracy in the New World. His first step, in the spring of 1877, was to set up a commis-

<sup>1</sup> The policies of Russia and of the other powers in Bulgaria are discussed in Chapter VI.

sion composed of three Russians and three Bulgarians to assemble information and statistics, all of which was published in the form of a periodical which appeared in five issues in 1877.<sup>2</sup> These materials covered such subjects as the Turkish administrative system and legal codes, the organization of schools and churches, the reforms projected by the Constantinople Conference, and similar questions. In addition, Cherkaskii made a personal investigation insofar as it was possible to do so at the time. As a result of this study he reached the conclusion that Bulgaria should be organized as a separate province, but that it should remain under Russian protection for the time being. The Turkish system of administration he found satisfactory in principle, and attributed its failure to the refusal of the Turkish officials to administer it. He therefore decided that ". . . the aim of the civil administration . . . is not to destroy the existing arrangements in Bulgaria, but rather to put an end to the arbitrary Turkish administration, while keeping all the institutions and laws which are not in contradiction with the just and humane government of the population."<sup>3</sup> However, Cherkaskii was not a constitutionalist in a Western European sense, and his main interest was the technical one of coördinating the Russian administrative system with the institutions of local government already in operation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Materyaly dlya izucheniya Bolgarii* [Materials for the study of Bulgaria], Bucharest, 1877.

<sup>3</sup> E. D. Grimm, "Istoriya i ideinyya osnovy proekta Organicheskago Ustava, vnesennago v Tyrnovskoe Uchreditelnoe Sobranie 1879 g." [The history and the ideological basis of the draft Organic Statute, submitted to the Constitutional Assembly of Tirnovo in 1879], *Godishnik na sofiiskiy universitet. III. Yuridicheski fakultet*, XVII (1920-21), 70-71.

<sup>4</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 65-83; Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1939), 112, n. 1, 112-113; D. G. Anuchin, "Knyaz V. A. Cherkaskii i grazhdanskoe upravlenie v Bolgarii, 1877-1878 gg." [Prince V. A. Cherkaskii and the civil administration of Bulgaria, 1877-1878], *Russkaya starina*, LXXXIII, iv (1895), 49-55; Lyubomir Vladikin, *Istoriya na Tyrnovskata Konstitutsiya* [History of the Constitution of Tirnovo] (Sofia, 1936), 28-32.

The death of Cherkaskii in March 1878, on the day of the signature of the Treaty of San Stefano, prevented him from completing the job which he had undertaken. Prince A. M. Dondukov-Korsakov was appointed his successor, and during the two months before he arrived General D. G. Anuchin substituted for him. It was Dondukov's job not only to complete the administrative organization of Bulgaria and to lay the bases for the judicial and military branches of the Russian provisional government, but also to make the preparations for the Assembly of Notables. His first set of instructions, received in April 1878, advised him to continue the line of policy established by his predecessor of giving the local population as large a part as possible in the administrative system. Special mention was also made of the establishment of a strong militia to insure the peace and security of the new land. Organized along Russian lines, it would be fully prepared to coöperate with the main body of the Russian troops in case of need. In July, after the Treaty of Berlin, which reduced the term of Russian occupation from two years to nine months, Dondukov received supplementary instructions in which particular emphasis was laid on the preparations for a constitutional assembly.<sup>5</sup>

Before discussing the Organic Statute itself, it is important to glance briefly at the form which the Russians gave to their administrative system, for it is an indication of the amount and type of self-government they were willing to give Bulgaria at a time when they were not counting on any interference from the other powers. While the prin-

<sup>5</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 83-93; Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung*, 118-122; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 34-44; for an account of the Russian administration in Eastern Rumelia, see Hristo N. Gandev, "K izucheniya dëyatelnosti russkago okupatsionnago upravleniya v Vostochnoi Rumelii, 1878-1879 gg." [Towards the study of the activity of the Russian government of occupation in Eastern Rumelia, 1878-1879], *Zapiski nauchnoizsledovatel'skago obedineniya pri russkii suobodnyi universitet v Prage*, VI (1938), 43-86.

## *The Preparation of the Organic Statute*

ciples of the system were established before the Treaty of Berlin, the present description will be limited to the territory allotted to Bulgaria in that document. Bulgaria was divided into five provinces, with headquarters at Sofia, Vidin, Tirnovo, Ruschuk and Varna. The Imperial Commissioner, in residence at Sofia, had the authority to issue executive orders, but could not decree laws without previously submitting them to the government at St. Petersburg. The executive branch of the government was formed by the Central Chancery, headed by a director and subdivided into six departments in charge of internal affairs, diplomacy, war, justice, education and finance, respectively. The heads of these departments, sitting with the director of the Chancery, formed the Supreme Administrative Council which met under the chairmanship of the Commissioner. This council had jurisdiction over questions pertaining to more than one department and its decisions, reached by a majority vote, carried the force of law after receiving the approval of the Commissioner. With the exception of Professor M. S. Drinov, a Bulgarian educated in Russia who was appointed head of the department of education, all of the leading officials were Russians.<sup>6</sup>

Each province was headed by an appointed governor, whose chief duties were the enforcement of the law and the collection of taxes. He was aided by an administrative council, composed both of *ex officio* members and of elected representatives of the district and municipal councils, which served in an advisory capacity. It was only in the districts, the municipalities and the village communes that the local population was given an important share in the government. In the districts, of which there were thirty-

<sup>6</sup> Austria-Hungary, *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* (hereafter cited as H. H. S.), Politisches Archiv, XII. 222: Turquie. Varia, Zwiedinek to Andrassy, No. 22, Supplement, January 15, 1879, contains a detailed and interesting account of the whole Russian administrative system.

eight altogether, the appointed administrator was aided by a district council composed of four permanent members, four extraordinary members and a secretary, as well as of representatives of the religious communities, who were called in on special occasions. Except for the last named, all of the members of the council were elected by popular vote, although not by universal suffrage. The method of voting was a complicated one which permitted the government to exercise a good deal of influence if it so desired. A preliminary list of passive voters was drawn up to include all men over twenty years of age owning real estate or businesses, and a second list of active voters was then made which included the property qualifications of the first list as well as a qualification of literacy and a minimum age of thirty years. On the day of election, those on the active list were eligible to be chosen by those on the passive, in the proportion of one to every fifty households. The electors thus chosen then assembled at the district capital to elect the members of the council. This same electoral system was used to elect members of the county, municipal and village councils, and each of these elective bodies was given considerable authority over strictly local affairs, such as the supervision of the military and administrative regulations and the assessment and collection of local taxes.<sup>7</sup>

The judicial system was largely the work of Dondukov, and was in principle quite independent of the administrative branch. Here, again, the aim was to use the local institutions as far as possible, but it went much farther in providing for the participation of the local population. The membership of the 2,851 village courts was entirely elective, and of the thirty-two district and the five provincial courts two-thirds of the members were elective, the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Zwiedinek to Andrassy, No. 22, Supplement, January 15, 1879; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 19-24; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 102-109.



## *The Preparation of the Organic Statute*

method of election being similar to that used in the case of the district and county councils. In addition to being largely elective, the personnel of the courts was entirely comprised of Bulgarian citizens. The only Russian in the entire judicial system was S. I. Lukiyanov, the head of the department of justice in the Central Chancery. In practice, especially in the provinces of Sofia and Varna, the Russians reported great difficulty in finding a sufficient number of citizens who could meet the qualification of literacy to fill the judicial and administrative posts open to them.<sup>8</sup>

There can be no doubt but that the Russians sincerely tried to make the administrative system of Bulgaria self-sufficient and to give the native population as large a share in the government as was possible at the time. If the salaries of the Russian officials were high, and if they lived in a way which frequently created resentment among the Bulgarians who were paying the bills of Russia's occupation, this must be attributed to the habits of the Russian bureaucracy and not to any desire to dominate the country in a dictatorial fashion. As a matter of fact, all the evidence points to the conclusion that the Russians hoped to see a Bulgaria which would be independent in an administrative sense but which would associate itself with Russian policy in the Balkans and would also provide a trained militia able and willing to coöperate with Russian troops.<sup>9</sup>

### THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE

WHILE Article 7 of the Treaty of San Stefano had made provisions for an Assembly of Notables which was to "elaborate, before the election of the prince and under the

<sup>8</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 110-114; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 37-38.

<sup>9</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 115-117; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 18-19; Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung*, 114-121.

superintendence of a Russian imperial commissioner and in the presence of an Ottoman commissioner, the organization of the future administration,"<sup>10</sup> little attention was paid to the matter in the spring of 1878. With the signing of the Treaty of Berlin, however, with its provision in Article 4 for a similar assembly which was to draw up an Organic Statute, Dondukov-Korsakov was instructed to proceed immediately with this task.<sup>11</sup>

Aside from the haste with which he had to work, the Russian Imperial Commissioner was faced with two main problems. In the first place, several of his Russian colleagues and a number of prominent Bulgarians expressed their doubts as to whether the country was capable of any self-government at all. Major General Demantovich, director of the Central Chancery, shared this view and proposed an assembly with very limited powers and a prince who would bear the chief burden of responsibility with the aid of an appointed senate. Many of the military officials were opposed to the idea of constitutional government in principle, and such ardent panslavs as Katkov and Aksakov could not be reconciled to the idea of the Russians themselves setting up such a system in Bulgaria. But Dondukov thought otherwise, and he was quite willing to coöperate with his superiors in carrying out the provisions of the revised treaty.<sup>12</sup>

If this difficulty was to a large extent solved by the force of circumstances, the second problem of reaching some agreement as to the type of statute which best suited the country was less easy of solution. Here Dondukov followed the sensible plan of studying the form of government in countries most resembling Bulgaria, and as early as July

<sup>10</sup> Gabriel Noradounghian, *Receuil d'actes internationaux de l'empire ottoman* (4 vols.; Paris, 1897-1903), III, 513.

<sup>11</sup> Noradounghian, *op. cit.*, IV, 178; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 120.

<sup>12</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 121-124.

## *The Preparation of the Organic Statute*

1878 he expressed the opinion that “. . . the Serbian Constitution more than any other corresponds to the customs and needs of the Bulgarian people, and at the same time offers to the Bulgarian Prince significant prerogatives of power.”<sup>13</sup> This idea of basing the Organic Statute on the Serbian Constitution of 1869 was a happy one, as it was a liberal document and made full provisions for a constitutional form of government and at the same time fitted a social structure almost identical with that of Bulgaria. The Rumanian Constitution of 1866 was of a somewhat different character. It provided more complete guarantees of civil rights and it also gave more power to the assembly, but this was amply compensated for by the bicameral legislative body and an electoral law which gave all the power to the *boyars* by means of a four-class system.<sup>14</sup>

In general, the Russians planned to follow the precedents set in 1830 when they were charged with a similar task in the Danubian Principalities, and their intention was to present to the Assembly of Notables a complete Organic Statute which it would be free to discuss and amend. S. I. Lukiyonov, head of the department of justice in the Chancery, was placed in charge of the work and his first step was to have the Serbian constitution, as well as parts of the Rumanian, translated into Bulgarian. At the same time, a serious attempt was made to discover the views of some of the leading Bulgarian citizens concerning certain important aspects of the Statute. This was done by sending a questionnaire with sixteen questions to eleven laymen and five bishops. All but one answered, and as great a diversity of views were expressed by this small group as were later discussed in the debates of the Constitutional Assembly. The questions concerned two main

<sup>13</sup> In a letter to D. A. Milyutin, July 8/20, 1878, quoted in Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 120.

<sup>14</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 125-126.

aspects of the constitution, the qualifications of the prince and the powers which should be allotted to him, including such matters as the form and powers of the national assembly and the cabinet. Although most of the answers were not received in time to be incorporated in the Statute before it was sent to St. Petersburg for approval, some of them were used at a later stage in the preparation of the draft. Moreover, Dondukov had already acquainted himself with many of these views through his personal conversations.<sup>15</sup>

The most thorough and scholarly of all the answers received was that of Professor M. S. Drinov, the only Bulgarian member of the Chancery. Drinov was one of those who believed that there was no firm foundation for a parliamentary form of government in Bulgaria, and his proposal was to have a trial period of seven years during which the prince should have broad powers. The real legislative body was to be a council of twelve, chosen for seven years by the same assembly that was to elect the prince. The national assembly, with the right only to discuss legislation initiated by the cabinet or the council, would be elected by an indirect system which provided educational and property qualifications for both the passive and the active electors. After the seven-year period, a more democratic form of government would be established. This idea of a trial period was accepted by Lukiyarov, and included in the Statute in the form of an article calling for a general revision of the constitution at the end of five years. In addition to answering the questionnaire in detail, Drinov was placed in charge of that part of the Statute which dealt with the religious question. This was a delicate matter, for now more than ever before the exarchate embodied the national ideal which for a few months had been repre-

<sup>15</sup> Stefan G. Balamezov, *Sravnitelno i bŭlgarsko konstitutsionno pravo* [Comparative and Bulgarian constitutional law] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1938), I, 6-10; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 139-140.

sented by the Bulgaria of San Stefano. Drinov's solution, which was supported by most of the Greek Orthodox hierarchy and which was finally adopted in substance by the Constitutional Assembly, was to give the exarch in Constantinople full control over religious affairs in Bulgaria, thus maintaining the unity of the Bulgarian church in spite of the break-up of the national state.<sup>16</sup>

Another important point of view was that of the clergy, as represented by Exarch Iosif and four other bishops. They all agreed that the prince should not be absolute, but they were at great odds as to how his powers should be limited. On the whole, they did not show very great confidence in the political maturity of their fellow countrymen. While only one favored a bicameral system, three recommended that part of the national assembly be appointed, and only the exarch himself pointed to the Serbian constitution as a suitable model. The problem which they faced was not made any easier by the fact that they did not yet know who was to fill the position of the prince whose powers they were asked to define. Recognizing the danger of granting too much power to a prince who was certain to be a foreigner, and probably one who knew little about Bulgaria, Todor Ikononov offered a plan which was representative of the ideas of the majority of those consulted. He was an honest and patriotic citizen of excellent reputation, and he was impressed with the necessity of compromising between the limited powers of an unknown prince and the lack of political experience of the country in general. Under these circumstances, it was natural that the more solid citizens who had had the advantages of education and travel should favor an Organic

<sup>16</sup> M. S. Drinov, "Izrobotvaneto na Bŭlgarskata Konstitutsiya (Neshto ot moite spomeni za tova delo i za moeto uchastie v nego)" [The elaboration of the Bulgarian constitution (Concerning my recollections of it and my part in it)], *Sŭchineniya* [Works], V. N. Zlatarski, ed. (3 vols.; Sofia, 1909-15), III, 164-185; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 143-146.

Statute which placed them in a strong position. Ikonomov's solution called for a small assembly of not over fifty members, elected by universal suffrage under a three-degree electoral system, and sharing its powers with an appointed senate of twenty members.<sup>17</sup>

While there was a general agreement over the plans for an elected prince with limited powers, widely divergent opinions were expressed as to the form which the national assembly should take. The group consulted by Lukiyarov was almost equally divided as to whether there should be one or two chambers, and in this connection it should be remembered that an upper house meant one controlled by the privileged few. The fact that the country was overwhelmingly agricultural in its population was used by some to insist that the electoral system should be completely democratic, and by others as an argument that educational and property qualifications should be set up so as to give the town-dwellers an influence in public affairs commensurate with their economic position in the country. At the same time, one of the bishops feared that since most of those with education had received their training abroad, and frequently in non-Slavic countries, special steps should be taken to prevent them from getting control of national affairs. This latter opinion is particularly interesting as one of the first expressions of a view which was later to become identified with the panslav branch of Russian policy. The question of the composition of the national assembly also brought forth divergent views, some favoring a legislative body composed entirely of elected members, and others recommending a considerable proportion of appointed and *ex officio* members. While a majority favored universal suffrage, they also proposed various forms of in-

<sup>17</sup> K. Ikonomov, ed., *Súchineniyata na Todor Ikonomov* [The works of Todor Ikonomov] (4 vols.; Shumen, 1897), IV, 97-103; Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 11-12; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 146.

direct voting which would have reduced considerably the influence of the electorate on the assembly.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, there were a number of special schemes and devices which are notable more for their originality than for their soundness. Of these, the most extraordinary was the form of ministerial responsibility proposed by Todor Burmov, who was to be Bulgaria's first prime minister. In case of a vote of no confidence, which he defined as two-thirds of the assembly, the prime minister was to call for new elections. If the cabinet was defeated in the new assembly, the prime minister would have the right to call a grand national assembly. This latter body was to be based on the Serbian model, and was entrusted with the particular task of electing the prince and amending the constitution. If the cabinet received a two-thirds adverse vote for a third time, under Burmov's plan the ministers would be forced to alter their views but would still remain in power.<sup>19</sup>

It is notable that the Bulgarians consulted by Lukiyarov were moderate in their views, and that no attempt was made to learn the views of the large body of radical Russophobes who had been brought up in the tradition of Rakovski, Karavelov and Botiv. While the antagonism to Russia which this section of public opinion felt had been largely dispelled by the recent events, they were soon to show themselves determined to guarantee their independence both of foreign domination and of control by a small group within the country. Dragan Tsankov was the only one of those consulted who shared this point of view, and he refused to answer the questionnaire. He felt that the

<sup>18</sup> Marko D. Balabanov, "Prédi pŕvoto uchrĕditelno sŭbranie v Tŕrnovo i prĕdi izbiraneto na pŕviya bŭlgarski knyaz" [Before the first constitutional assembly in Tirnovo and before the election of the first Bulgarian prince], *Periodichesko spisanie*, XIX, No. 68 (1907), 647-666; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 150-157.

<sup>19</sup> Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 10-11.

proper way to consult Bulgarian opinion was through a regular assembly, where all points of view would be represented and where opinions could be freely exchanged. It was natural that the Russians should not consult extremist opinion, as they had some reason to fear that Bulgaria would become a second Switzerland: a refuge for Russian political exiles. But great consolation was gained from the hope that a strong central authority, keeping in touch with the essentially conservative peasants, would provide a stable form of government.<sup>20</sup>

Aside from the diversity of the views expressed by the Bulgarian leaders to whom he sent his questionnaire, the tardiness of the answers and the haste with which he had to work prevented Lukiyarov from going very far beyond the Serbian and the Rumanian constitutions in search of materials. His main job was to adapt the Serbian plan to the limitations imposed by the Treaty of Berlin, and to rearrange the articles and clauses in a more logical fashion. On the surface, the changes thus produced were considerable, as the number of articles was increased from 133 to 205, and the number of chapters from ten to twenty-three. Actually, the substance of the Serbian constitution was not greatly altered. In certain respects, and especially in the case of the national representation, a note of conservatism was introduced. In the Serbian Grand National Assembly all the members were elected, while in Bulgaria a considerable number were to hold their position *ex officio*, and in the ordinary National Assembly only half the members were to be elected as opposed to three-quarters in Serbia. More surprising is the fact that Burmov's interpretation of ministerial responsibility was accepted. On the whole, the Russian aim was to have representatives of the nation, or "notables," rather than national representatives in the two assemblies.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 141-142, 158-162.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 162-172.



## *The Preparation of the Organic Statute*

But in other respects the Organic Statute was more liberal in its provisions. The Council of State, for instance, which was entirely appointed in Serbia, was to have one-half of its members elected by the National Assembly from among its own membership. At the same time, the Council was given wider powers, and Lukiyarov further altered the Serbian model to permit civil servants to vote and to be brought before the courts without government authorization. In giving the National Assembly the right of interpellation, the Organic Statute followed Rumanian rather than Serbian practice, although it contradicted both models by placing a strong armed force at the disposal of that body. Many of these changes had an anti-monarchical bias, and serve as an indication of the fact that the Russians did not know whether they would be able to trust the new prince.<sup>22</sup>

When it reached this stage, the Organic Statute was sent to St. Petersburg in November 1878, and returned a little over a month later with a number of corrections and alterations of secondary importance. Some more changes were made in Sofia, and in the final task of translating it, which was entrusted to Professor Drinov, several errors were made which slightly altered some of the provisions. It was in this form that the Organic Statute reached the Assembly of Notables, or the Constitutional Assembly as it was soon to be called, for discussion and acceptance.<sup>23</sup>

### THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE ORGANIC STATUTE

In its final edition, the Organic Statute was a compromise between the forms of government adopted by Serbia and

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 173-197.

<sup>23</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 202-219; Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 18-25; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 82-93; Ekaterina Hristova Stoyanova, "Kŭm istoriyata na bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya. Posledni prouchvaniya" [Towards the history of the Bulgarian constitution. The latest investigations] (Typescript; Sofia, 1939).

Rumania, the limitations imposed by the Treaty of Berlin and the special interests represented by Russian policy and by the Greek Orthodox Church. The Principality of Bulgaria was defined as "a hereditary and constitutional monarchy, with a national representation and in a relationship of vassal to the Sublime Porte."<sup>24</sup> The executive power was entrusted to the prince, who likewise shared the legislative power with the national representatives. The judicial branch acted in the name of the prince, but their relationship was not defined. The prince was also commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and represented the Principality in its relations with foreign powers. The customary restrictions were made on the prince's right to travel abroad, but this restriction was more than counterbalanced by the provision that all responsibility for his policies must be borne by the Council of Ministers. The prince's position was further enhanced by his right of veto, which was implied in the requirement that all bills must receive his approval before they could have the force of law.<sup>25</sup> In religious matters, the Principality was to form a part of the Bulgarian exarchate, and religious freedom was guaranteed to all minorities.<sup>26</sup> Detailed arrangements were made for the succession to the throne, and for a regency elected by the Grand National Assembly in case the throne became vacant. A certain check was imposed on the prince by requiring him to take an oath of office, and by limiting his civil list to one million francs a year.<sup>27</sup>

Equality before the law was guaranteed, and the Statute stated specifically that no class differences were recognized. Foreigners, however, were placed under certain restrictions as regards entering government service. Property rights were carefully protected, as were the basic rights of all citi-

<sup>24</sup> Article 3; the statute may be found in Grimm, *loc. cit.*, Appendix.

<sup>25</sup> Chapter II.

<sup>26</sup> Chapter IX.

<sup>27</sup> Chapters V, VI and VII.

## *The Preparation of the Organic Statute*

zens. The duty of military service was made obligatory for all.<sup>28</sup> The national will was represented by two bodies, the Grand National Assembly and the ordinary National Assembly. The former body, was composed in part of representatives of the clergy, the judicial system and the provincial, district and municipal councils, and in part of elected members in a proportion twice as great as that for the ordinary National Assembly. Its special province was the election of regents, the formal consent to the cession or annexation of territory, the election of a new prince and the amending of the constitution. For the last-named purpose a two-thirds majority was necessary.<sup>29</sup> The ordinary National Assembly was composed in a similar way, with the exception that the prince had the right to appoint half as many members as were elected. The rights and immunities of the deputies were guaranteed, and the sessions of the assembly were to be public although the galleries could be cleared by a majority vote. The assembly had full legislative power, and special emphasis was laid in the Statute on its control over financial matters. It was apparently hoped that the assembly would be satisfied with exercising a close control over the budget and would leave the conduct of policy and the formulation of the fundamental laws to the cabinet and the Council of State.<sup>30</sup>

It was expected that the main burden of drawing up the laws which were to lay the foundation of the new state would fall on the Council of State. This body, in its final form, was to have from seven to twelve members appointed by the prince, and two members from each of the five provinces elected by the National Assembly from its own membership. Thus constituted, the Council was given wide powers in legislative matters by virtue of its duty of reviewing all bills before they were presented to the National

<sup>28</sup> Chapter XII.

<sup>30</sup> Chapters XIV and IV.

<sup>29</sup> Chapters XIII and XX.

Assembly. It was also the clearinghouse for all differences of opinion and conflicts between the various provinces, and it was given authority to serve as a court of last instance on certain judicial matters. These are only a few of the functions assigned to the Council, but they serve to indicate the importance of the position which it was intended to fill. The last important organ of state was the Council of Ministers, which was appointed and dismissed by the prince. The ministers, of whom there were seven, were collectively responsible both to the prince and to the assembly. The Organic Statute was to be kept in this form for five years, and at the end of that term the Grand National Assembly would be called to make such amendments as seemed necessary.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Chapter XIX.

## CHAPTER IV. THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY

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### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY

THE Constitutional Assembly which Prince Dondukov-Korsakov officially opened at Tirnovo on February 10/22, 1879,<sup>1</sup> was truly representative of Bulgarian opinion. Of the 231 deputies, all but ten of whom arrived in time for the opening session, 118 came *ex officio* as members of the church hierarchy, the Moslem and Hebrew faiths, the court of cassation and the provincial and district councils. In the original Russian plan these were to have been the only "notables" represented, but the Commissioner obtained the consent of Giers in November 1878 to have additional deputies elected in the proportion of one to every ten thousand male inhabitants. Under this arrangement, eighty-nine deputies were elected to the assembly. In addition, twenty-one deputies were appointed directly by the Commissioner. This was done partly to give the Mohammedans a larger representation, as they had not been returned in the elections in a number proportional to the twenty-six per cent of the population which was Turkish, and partly to include some prominent Bulgarians, notably P. R. Slaveïkov, who for one reason or another had been left out. Finally, the monastery of Rila and the Bulgarian societies in Odessa and Vienna were permitted to send one representative apiece. After the assembly

<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusion, dates from the Slavic sources will be cited according to both the Julian and the Gregorian calendars, a difference of twelve days in the nineteenth century.

had been opened, two further representatives in the latter category arrived.<sup>2</sup>

As to the fairness of this arrangement there can be no doubt. As a recent authority has expressed it, ". . . in spite of the fact that there were only eighty-nine elected deputies in the assembly, nobody has denied either then or since that it included absolutely all the prominent Bulgarians of the Principality."<sup>3</sup> It is unfortunate that no detailed analysis was made at the time of the background, ideas and experience of the various members of the assembly, for at present it is impossible to do so in any detail. It is necessary, however, to dismiss the idea that the members of the assembly were totally incompetent and ignorant of the subject with which they were dealing.

Dr. Washburn, President of Robert College in Constantinople where forty-five Bulgarians received their education before 1879, states that "the assembly itself was unique, made up largely of peasants, many of them in their sheepskin clothes, and I think there was no one in the assembly who knew anything about parliamentary law except the old students of Robert College, who were in force. There was not a member who had had any personal experience in civil government."<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact, a comparison of the list of alumni of Robert College and the membership of the Constitutional Assembly reveals that

<sup>2</sup> E. D. Grimm, "Istoriya i ideinyya osnovy proekta Organicheskago Ustava, vnesennago v Tyrnovskoe Uchreditelnoe Sobranie 1879 g." [The history and the ideological basis of the draft Organic Statute, submitted to the Constitutional Assembly of Tirnovo in 1879], *Godishnik na sofïskiya universitet. III. Yuridicheski fakultet*, XVII (1920-21), 232-233; Lyubomir Vladikin, *Istoriya na Tŭrnovskata Konstitutsiya* [History of the Constitution of Tirnovo] (Sofia, 1936), 96-97; Stefan G. Balamezov, *Sravnitelno i bŭlgarsko konstitutsionno pravo* [Comparative and Bulgarian constitutional law] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1938), I, 27; Constantin Jireček, *Das Fürstenthum Bulgarien* (Wien, 1891), 45.

<sup>3</sup> Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 28-29.

<sup>4</sup> George Washburn, *Fifty years in Constantinople and recollections of Robert College* (Boston and New York, 1909), 147.

only four of them were graduates of the American institution, and of these only two played a role of any prominence.<sup>5</sup>

On the basis of experience, the members of the assembly may be divided into two main groups. The first consists of those who had already played an important part in national affairs, either as members of the Turkish civil service, as leaders in the struggle for an independent church or as revolutionaries. A number of them had received their education either in Western Europe or in Russia, and others had gone to one of the schools in Constantinople. While their experience in parliamentary procedure may have been deficient, they had taken part in several ecclesiastical assemblies with considerable success and had had a good deal of experience in the general politics and statecraft which was a part of all of their dealings with the Turkish authorities. The second group was that of those who were new to Bulgarian public life. Some were members of the older generation, such as Professor Drinov, who had spent the greater part of his life abroad and who was now called back to aid in the creation of the new state. Others were younger men, frequently with law degrees from Western Europe, who had played no role before the liberation but who immediately took a leading position because of their education and ability. Among this latter group were Stoilov, Grekov, Nachevich, Gorbanov and Karavelov.

That a majority of the assembly wore clothing which looked strange to the Western observer was undoubtedly true, and there was probably a definite relationship between their sartorial tastes and their experience in public

<sup>5</sup> *Catalogue of the officers, graduates and students of Robert College, Constantinople, 1878-1879* (Constantinople, 1879) gives a list of the names, addresses and professions of the alumni; *Protokolitě na uchreditelnoto bulgarsko narodno sūbranie v Tŕnovo* [The protocols of the Bulgarian national constitutional assembly in Tirnovo] (Plovdiv, 1879), ix-xvi (hereafter cited as *Protokolitě*).

affairs. But this fact did not prevent warm debates from developing over such questions as freedom of speech and assembly, censorship of religious books, the merits of a senate or a council of state, and questions of a similar nature. The very changes which were made in the Organic Statute stand as a witness to the vigor and convictions which the deputies brought to their task. It was in the formulation of the individual articles, in the omissions of various kinds and in the frequently illogical structure of the constitution as a whole that the lack of parliamentary and constitutional experience made itself felt. It has been estimated that, of the total membership, some sixty-five took part in the debates, and it was terms such as "nationalism," "liberty" and "equality" which occurred most frequently.<sup>6</sup>

The rules drawn up for the conduct of the Constitutional Assembly made full provision for its independence and for the systematic discussion of the Organic Statute. While some of the members were elected and others appointed or *ex officio*, it was made clear that the body was homogeneous and that each member was to consider the interests of the country as a whole. The immunity of the deputies was guaranteed, as was their freedom of speech. The sessions were regularly open to the public, but could be closed on the proposal of twenty of the members, signed by one-third of the deputies. A quorum was defined as a majority of the total membership, and any amendment to the Statute could be made by a simple majority. The members rose to indicate their acceptance of a proposal, and this was apparently the only method of voting used, although the ballot and the roll call were both provided for, in case one-third of the members desired them. Amendments could be proposed either from the floor or in writing. Provision was made for the election of all the necessary

<sup>6</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 284-289.



officers, and special regulations were included to assure the regular attendance of all the deputies.<sup>7</sup> In practice, there were a good many irregularities, but this was due more to inexperience than to intent. As will be pointed out later, a considerable part of the real discussion within the different parties took place outside of the assembly and the regular sessions tended to be restricted to the defense of their point of view by the various groups concerned.<sup>8</sup>

Owing to the fact that the assembly was meeting in partial fulfillment of the Treaty of Berlin, the role of the foreign representatives at Tirnovo was important. Von Zwiedinek, Palgrave, Brüning, Schefer and Brunenghi represented Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy, respectively, but it was only the Austrian and British consuls who took any real initiative. On the eve of the opening of the assembly, the foreign delegates met in Sofia and agreed to be present at the opening and closing sessions and to attend the debates as frequently as possible in order to keep a close watch on the proceedings.<sup>9</sup> After the sessions had started, Zwiedinek did his best to persuade his colleagues that they should form a commission so as to present a united front in case they desired to oppose any Russian move, but he found them very reluctant. Brüning agreed with his Austrian colleague in principle, but intimated that his instructions made it ". . . his absolute duty to conduct himself in a completely neutral manner."<sup>10</sup> Schefer and Brunenghi were not eager to cooperate

<sup>7</sup> "Pravilnik za vätreshnii poryadük na uchreditelnoto narodno sübranie" [Regulations for the internal order of the national constitutional assembly], *Protokolitë*, 19-23.

<sup>8</sup> Georgi T. Danailov, "Petko Karavelov," *Godishnik na demokraticheskata partiya*, I (1905), 30-31.

<sup>9</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 31, Sofia, February 5, 1879; Great Britain, Public Record Office, Political Despatches, Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 10, Sofia, February 3, 1879 (hereafter cited as F. O.).

<sup>10</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 37, Tirnovo, February 24, 1879.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

and Palgrave, according to Zwiedinek, wanted to be free to exert what he thought was an important influence both on the Bulgarian leaders and on Prince Dondukov-Korsakov.<sup>11</sup> As a matter of fact, Palgrave's instructions read: "Be very careful to work with your Austrian colleague in everything. Everywhere else the two governments are working together and we attach a very high value to the alliance."<sup>12</sup>

It is not necessary to assume, however, that Palgrave was failing to carry out his instructions. The chief purpose of the presence of the foreign representatives at Tirnovo was to see that the assembly proceeded with its work of drawing up a constitution, and that the Russian provisional government withdrew within the time allotted by the Treaty of Berlin. As soon as it became evident that the Russians were intent on fulfilling their part of the bargain faithfully, Palgrave doubtless felt that there was no need for such a formal step as the Austrian consul suggested. What Zwiedinek had originally feared was an assembly completely dominated by the Russians. Over a month before leaving for Tirnovo, he had mentioned this danger in a despatch to Andrassy. "Everything," he wrote, "seems to point to the fact that it is planned to have the draft of the future constitution of Bulgaria, which has been drawn up by the provisional government . . . accepted by the Assembly of Notables before it has had time to form an opinion on the matter or to raise any serious objections to its specific provisions."<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Article 4 of the Treaty of Berlin might well be interpreted to mean that the assembly itself was to elaborate the constitution. Early in February, these doubts were somewhat allayed by Don-

<sup>11</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, *ibid.*, No. 37, Tirnovo, February 24, 1879.

<sup>12</sup> To Palgrave, F. O. 78/2981, January 6, 1879.

<sup>13</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 15, Sofia, January 1, 1879.

dukov himself, and the foreign representatives agreed not to raise any objections.<sup>14</sup>

It was, perhaps, because the issue had thus been raised, that Dondukov made a special point of emphasizing the freedom of the assembly in his opening speech. "The draft here presented for your consideration," he said, "is nothing more than a program to facilitate your work . . . this program should not restrain or restrict your convictions. With complete independence in personal views and freedom in public debate, each one of you should follow his conscience and his convictions . . . the final decisive word belongs to you and to you alone."<sup>15</sup>

#### THE INITIATIVE OF THE MODERATES

THE delegates who assembled at Tirnovo in February 1879 for the Constitutional Assembly, while they had not come as representatives of any particular groups or parties, were immediately faced with an issue which created a serious division among them. This was the "national question," or the "question of integral Bulgaria," which has remained one of the most important issues in the history of the country. Before the assembly opened in Tirnovo the question as to whether any attempt should be made to abide by the Treaty of Berlin had been seriously discussed in Philipopolis. All were agreed at the time, as they have been ever since, that the national ideal was to unite all Bulgarians in one independent state. The issue was whether it would be better to accept the settlement of Berlin for the time being and wait for a more opportune moment, or to risk all in a fight for independence. As regards Eastern Rumelia, the more moderate view won out with the support of all the

<sup>14</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, *ibid.*, No. 31, Sofia, February 5, 1879.

<sup>15</sup> *Protokolitě*, 5-6.

older politicians, but at Tirnovo the discussion developed into serious proportions.<sup>16</sup>

Meeting informally, on the eve of the opening of the assembly, the view was seriously urged by many of the younger delegates, and by others who came unofficially from Eastern Rumelia and from Macedonia, that to participate in the Constitutional Assembly would be to accept the Treaty of Berlin. They therefore urged that the delegates boycott the assembly until it was made representative of all Bulgarians. Within this group, some were willing to rely on their own forces while others, who are supposed to have received the backing of Dondukov, preferred to continue under the Russian provisional administration. A more moderate view was taken by the better educated and more mature delegates who felt that their task was to work out a satisfactory form of government for Bulgaria and to wait patiently until national unity could be achieved with less danger. Ikononov, one of the moderate members, in an attempt to reach a compromise between the different opinions, proposed that Bulgaria relinquish her independent position and join Eastern Rumelia as an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire on condition that Macedonia be united to them. The proposal is an interesting one, and would undoubtedly have caused the powers a great deal of trouble had it been adopted, but the majority felt that it would involve too great a sacrifice of Bulgaria's rights.<sup>17</sup>

The role played by Dondukov during these discussions is rather obscure. His earlier reports to Giers, sent before

<sup>16</sup> Simeon Radev, *Stroitelitë na sùvrēmenna Bùlgariya* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1911), I, 14-16.

<sup>17</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII, 222, No. 40, Tirnovo, February 25, 1879; *Maritsa* (Plovdiv, 1878-85), II, No. 59 (February 20/March 4, 1879); K. Ikononov, ed., *Sùchinieniyata na Todor Ikononov* [The works of Todor Ikononov] (4 vols.; Shumen, 1897), IV, 104-112; Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 32; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 28-30.

the opening of the assembly, indicate that he was aware that there might be a good deal of trouble but was willing to entertain petitions only from those members of the assembly who had been elected. If they desired to make complaints in a restrained and official manner he would not object, but he would permit no action which might delay the procedure of the assembly. However, it was not long before he was laying plans to make use of the opposition to the Treaty of Berlin for Russia's own ends. The assembly could not be disrupted, but would it not be possible for the Bulgarians, after elaborating the constitution, to refuse to elect a prince and to demand instead a continuation of the Russian administration in the form of a protectorate? From his correspondence with Prince Lobanov, the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, it is apparent that Dondukov hoped for a reopening of the Eastern Question as the result of a revolution in the Turkish capital. If such an opportunity occurred, a formal demand on the part of the Bulgarian delegates for a union of Bulgaria with Eastern Rumelia would be most valuable. As it turned out, however, not only did Abdul Hamid maintain his position on the Turkish throne, but the Russian government itself insisted that the Treaty of Berlin be strictly enforced.<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, the opening of the Constitutional Assembly on February 10/22 did not bring the discussion of the national question to an end. On the following three days meetings were held informally, and as no compromise could be agreed upon a vote was taken as to whether or not the assembly should be boycotted. Only ten members, including Karavelov, Stoilov and Marinov, favored the extreme solution, and the majority agreed on the more mod-

<sup>18</sup> Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 247-260; N. R. Ovsyanyi, *Blizhnii Vostok i slavyanstvo* [The Near East and Slavdom] (St. Petersburg, 1913), 53-55.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

erate procedure of drawing up a memoir to be presented to the powers.<sup>19</sup>

Some credit for the victory of the moderate point of view in this first crisis over the national question must certainly be given to W. Gifford Palgrave, the active British representative whom Dondukov characterized as "... combining in himself the eccentricity of John Bull with the cunning of a Jesuit priest and an Eastern fakir. . . ." <sup>20</sup> He was naturally worried over the danger of an attempt to unite the two Bulgarias, especially if it were carried out under the auspices of Russian panslavs, and he admitted using his "utmost influence" in support of the moderates.<sup>21</sup> His close contacts with the Bulgarian leaders, however, soon revealed to him a fact which Europe was not to discover for several years, namely, that the Bulgarians were not necessarily a tool of Russian policy. He reported that there did not "... exist any Pan-Slavistic tendency, or even sympathy, among the Bulgarians, whether leaders or mass. Their tendencies are remarkably, I might almost say unamiably, exclusive; and may not incorrectly be defined as Pan-Bulgarian; nothing more. As to their Servian and Russian cousins, they make no secret of their hearty dislike of the former, and of their wish, gratitude apart, to be well rid of the latter."<sup>22</sup>

With Dondukov determined to see the assembly at work and with the moderates in the majority, the national representatives set to work on the rules of procedure. As yet, there were no real parties within the assembly. The division over the national question was not based on political principles and it did not last very long. Once the decision to proceed with the elaboration of the constitution had been

<sup>19</sup> Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 31-32; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 38-43.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 256; for Palgrave's colorful career see the sketch of his life in the *Dictionary of national biography*, XLIII, 109-110.

<sup>21</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 15, Tirnovo, February 20, 1879.

<sup>22</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 17, Tirnovo, February 21, 1879.

made, the minority took an active part in the debates and before long the traditional prejudices which had grown up before the liberation again came to the surface. Again it was a small group of the gentry and wealthier merchants, seeking a moderate and authoritarian regime, who opposed the leaders of the revolution and their followers who had come under the influence of progressive ideas. But this more profound division did not appear immediately. When the officers of the assembly were elected, early in March, Bishop Antim of Vidin was chosen as president and Petko Karavelov and Todor Ikononov as vice-presidents. While Antim remained a neutral figure throughout most of the assembly, his two aides were consistently on the opposing sides of all the important issues. A similar lack of party candidates was true of the lesser offices, although the older and more moderate leaders tended to have the advantage because of the wide familiarity of their names.<sup>23</sup>

The revival of the national question just as the assembly was ready to get down to work caused great annoyance to the foreign representatives. The disappointment over the Treaty of Berlin on the part of the Bulgarian deputies was both profound and sincere, but to Zwiedinek and Palgrave the long and patriotic speeches seemed like a deliberate attempt to delay the proceedings. If the assembly should fail to complete its task before the term of the Russian occupation ran out, the Russians might use the excuse to maintain their position indefinitely. But this fear turned out to be extreme, for on March 7/19 Lukyanov, the Commissioner's representative, brought a halt to the discussion of the national question and insisted that the assembly proceed with the examination of the Organic Statute. The

<sup>23</sup> D. Marinov, *Stefan Stambolov i novēshata ni istoriya* (*Lētopisni spomēni i ocherki*) [Stefan Stambolov and our recent history (Chronological recollections and sketches)] (Sofia, 1909), 57-59; *Protokolitē*, 31-90; Iv. Pandaleev Ormandzhiev, *Antim I bŭlgarski ekzarh* [Antim I, Bulgarian exarch] (Sofia, 1928), 68-70.

deputies thereupon agreed on the presentation of a memoir to the powers, and the matter was finally buried.<sup>24</sup>

The question of what procedure should be used in discussing the Organic Statute was the next issue, and in the debates on this point it is possible to distinguish the first signs of the difference in outlook which was soon to divide the Constitutional Assembly into two groups: the moderates, who wished to place in power the patriotic and honest elite of the well-educated and experienced, and the extremists, who insisted that the most democratic methods and institutions should be adopted so as to give the people direct control over legislative and executive power. Thus Stoilov, soon to be a leader of the moderates, moved that a committee be elected to report on the Organic Statute. The motion was passed, but not before a protest had been made by Tsankov, who claimed that "The laws of Montenegro may not be based on scientific theories, but they work . . . the laws which are to be drawn up for our people should be examined by the national representatives, not by scholarly committees."<sup>25</sup> On March 10/22 a committee of fifteen of the more moderate members was elected ". . . to report on the Statute, presented by the government, and on the principles which seem to it most suitable as the basis of the Bulgarian Constitution."<sup>26</sup>

The election of this committee, which presented its report eleven days later, was the last important victory of the forces of moderation. Henceforth, all the issues discussed were political and the moderates could no longer rely on the support either of the Russian or of the British and Aus-

<sup>24</sup> *Protokolitě*, 93-122; Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 23, Tirnovo, March 1, 1879; No. 54, Tirnovo, April 5, 1879; Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII, 222, Tirnovo, March 21, 1879; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 43-46; Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 32-35; Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1939), 132-134.

<sup>25</sup> *Protokolitě*, 127-132.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.



trian representatives as had previously been the case. When it was a question of whether or not the Treaty of Berlin should be obeyed, the moderates could count on the strong backing of the signatories of that treaty, but when it was merely the provisions of the new constitution which were involved, the foreign observers at the outset had no rival programs to support. Under these circumstances, the vigor and enthusiasm of the extremists had little difficulty in overcoming the authority of their opponents. The last hindrance to the free consideration of the Organic Statute was removed when Dondukov dismissed the objections raised by the Porte. On March 14 Pertev Efendi, the Turkish representative, submitted to the Russian Commissioner a list of objections to the Russian draft, mentioning particularly the fact that the prince was to be hereditary and was to be given the power to conclude treaties with foreign countries. This aspect of the Statute, along with the right of the Grand National Assembly to authorize territorial changes, they held to be contrary to the Treaty of Berlin. Dondukov's answer, to which the Turks could find no reply, was that the Organic Statute was merely a preliminary draft and could not be considered a violation of the treaty until it had been approved by the assembly.<sup>27</sup>

The report on the Organic Statute submitted by the committee recommended that the Russian plan be accepted with few changes. In an introductory statement, it outlined four main principles on which it believed any Bulgarian constitution should be based. These were freedom, equality before the law, self-government and the inviolability of property, and the report considered them sufficiently guaranteed by the Statute. It warned particularly of the danger of trying to bridge too rapidly the gap between Turkish rule and complete independence, and

<sup>27</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 54, Tirnovo, March 17, 1879.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

concluded that “. . . it is unavoidably necessary that our constitution should reflect a spirit of reasonable conservatism and that our government should be firm and powerful.”<sup>28</sup> The people, especially in the first years of the liberation, should learn to respect authority. The changes which the committee suggested were for the most part unimportant. They accepted freedom of conscience, for instance, but wished to forbid proselytizing. There should be stricter rules for bringing ministers to trial, and there should be free and compulsory education.<sup>29</sup>

The one striking change was in the composition of the National Assembly, which they wished to see entirely elective. In making its recommendation on this point, the report suggested a change which since then has often been discussed. It was a form of corporative or class representation which Stamboliiski, the agrarian leader, was to advocate in the twentieth century and which has since been adopted in the country in a modified form as the only solution for the evils of party politics. “The participation of the people in the legislative power,” said the report, “does not merely mean that the people should govern themselves, but also that in this self-government the various economic and political interests should be represented in a way proportional to the influence which they exercise in the life of the country.”<sup>30</sup> The committee distinguished four main social groups: the peasants and other owners of real estate, those with intermediate or higher education, businessmen and merchants paying a minimum annual tax of 100 piasters, and finally the upper clergy and intelligentsia. Having thus analyzed Bulgarian society, the qualifications recommended for passive voters included a minimum age of twenty-one years and either the ownership of real estate,

<sup>28</sup> *Protokolitě*, 9.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-13; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 55-57; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 280-293.

<sup>30</sup> *Protokolitě*, 13.

or the payment of 100 piasters in taxes or, finally, intermediate or higher education. The active voters, or those eligible for office, would require the additional qualifications of literacy and a minimum age of twenty-five. In addition to an elected National Assembly, the report recommended a Senate of from twenty to twenty-five members. Of these, ten to fifteen would be appointed by the prince, two would represent the Orthodox Church and one the Mohammedan. Of the remaining six, some would be designated by the courts, the educational institutions and the learned societies, and the rest would be elected by the people.<sup>31</sup>

When presented to the Constitutional Assembly on March 21/April 2, the committee's report was immediately attacked by the extremists under the leadership of Petko Karavelov and P. R. Slaveïkov. To them, the whole report was just another plot of the *chorbajis* and the merchants to take the place of the Turks as the oppressors of the people. Karavelov attacked the four principles as being meaningless and demanded, first, that the committee be given a vote of no confidence, second, that the assembly return to the "statu quo ante comisionem" (*sic*) and, finally, that the assembly proceed to discuss the Statute chapter by chapter. This proposal was followed by a vitriolic attack by Slaveïkov, who used to best advantage his knowledge of the colloquial language, the proverb and the popular phraseology which he had acquired during his long years of teaching among the common people. He made no attempt at a logical analysis of the report, but restricted himself to pouring ridicule on it. "The committee," he said, "wishes to give us freedom like Holy Communion—bit by bit, as though our stomachs were weak; . . . They want a free people, but they take away their freedom; they want a

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-15.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

strong government, but they take away its strength; they are afraid of any contacts between the government and the people and they are trying to put a barrier between them."<sup>32</sup> There was never any question, when the attack by the extremists got under way, but that the report would be defeated, and with it went the last hope of the moderate members that they would be able to dominate the assembly.<sup>33</sup>

While a more detailed account of the parties which were to develop in the assembly is given in the next chapter, it is interesting to note here that a week before the report of the committee was rejected the British representative foresaw the ultimate defeat of the moderate party.<sup>34</sup> What he did not foresee, however, was that the "Russian presence" would be withdrawn so soon. It is, in fact, a weighty proof of the independence of the assembly from Russian influence that the initiative of the moderate leaders who at first depended on it for their strength should have failed in the attempt to have the Organic Statute accepted with only minor changes.

### THE VICTORY OF THE EXTREMISTS

WHILE it is true that the members of the Constitutional Assembly were lacking in experience and technical knowledge, and that they did not discuss the Organic Statute either in a thorough or in a methodical fashion, serious debates nevertheless took place on a number of the most important issues. The position of the church, the powers of the prince, elementary education, civil liberties and the virtues of a bicameral system all aroused the serious consideration of the leaders in the assembly, and it is by examining the debates on these questions that one may best dis-

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 162-164.

<sup>34</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 46, Tirnovo, March 25, 1879.

cover the intellectual equipment and the political views of the two groups that were to dominate Bulgarian politics as long as the constitutional issues remained supreme.

It would be a mistake to assume that the extremists, the Liberals or the Ultras, as they were variously called, represented a revolutionary proletariat or peasantry eager to vindicate what they regarded as their natural rights. They were, on the contrary, a small group of able men who were remarkably successful in expressing within the framework of the constitutional issues the hopes and fears of the great majority of the responsible Bulgarian citizenry. While he did not play such an important role in the debates, the brains of the group was Petko Karavelov, a younger brother of the famous revolutionary. Petko was born in 1843 in Koprivshitsa and received his early education in a Greek school in Enos where he was apprenticed to a weaver. At the age of sixteen he was sent to Moscow to continue his studies, which he finally completed in 1864. His university career was an erratic one, as he was more interested in reading widely than in following the texts of his law course. He was greatly influenced by the Russian idealism of the sixties, and he acquired a reading knowledge of English, French and German so as to have access to the classics of his day in the fields of political economy, history, geography, statistics, political theory and parliamentary law. The English writers were his favorites, and his views were always buttressed with quotations from Stubbs, Blackstone, Smith, Stephen, Maine, Gladstone, Disraeli and particularly Bagehot.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> G. T. Danailov, "Petko Karavelov," *Godishnik na demokraticeskata partiya*, I (1905), 22-28; P. Karavelov, "Bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya i predlagamitŭ v neya promŕneniya ot Konservativnata partiya" [The Bulgarian constitution and the amendments proposed by the Conservative Party], *Nauka*, II (1882), 774-809, *passim*; Al. Girginov, "P. Karavelov v sluzhba na demokratizma i v zashtita na bŭlgarskitŭ natsionalni interesi" [P. Karavelov in the service of democracy and in the defence of the Bulgarian national interests], *Petko Karavelov po sluchai 25 godishninata ot negovata smŕrt i*

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

After completing his formal education, Karavelov remained in Russia until 1878 with the exception of a brief trip in 1872 to visit his family in Bulgaria and his brother in Bucharest. In Moscow, he made a profitable living as tutor in the homes of prominent families, and he was a welcome guest in many of the leading salons of the city. Aksakov was perhaps the most influential of his friends, and one whose support was to be of great value when Russia marched into Bulgaria. During this period he had no contacts with Bulgaria and took no part in the revolutionary movement. Instead, he stored up a reservoir of knowledge, energy and idealism which made him a leader among his countrymen within a very short time. With the establishment of the Russian provisional government, Karavelov received responsible positions in Vidin and Tirnovo, but when the Constitutional Assembly met in 1879 he was still unknown to most of its members.

Various explanations have been put forward to account for his immediate success in the assembly. Certainly one of the most valid is the prestige with which his brother Lyuben had endowed the name of Karavelov. Furthermore, he was highly thought of by the Russians both because of his good connections in Moscow and as the interpreter of the Russian sentimental idealism which was shared by many of the Russians in Bulgaria. His broad knowledge of political and constitutional problems and his casual reference to authorities in several languages carried weight with the younger schoolteachers and intellectuals in the assembly who were looking for a theoretical and authoritative basis for their egalitarian and democratic feelings. And finally, the success of his views was greatly aided by the able and energetic support of men such as P. R. Slaveïkov and D. Tsankov, with whom he frequently outlined

*50 godishnina na bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya* (Sofia, 1929), 49-50; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 31-34.

a plan of attack before the main issues were discussed in the assembly, thus giving leadership and direction to the extremist point of view. His energy, his stubbornness, his devotion to the people and the sincerity of his convictions soon gave him a position in the assembly which no other member could rival. After the failure of the movement to boycott the Constitutional Assembly, in which he played an important part, he submitted to the necessity of laying aside the national aims for the time being and devoted himself to the work of the assembly. As one of the vice-presidents, he presided over the debates on numerous occasions without, however, using his position to discriminate against his opponents.<sup>36</sup>

If Karavelov was the intellectual leader of the extreme democrats, Slaveïkov and Tsankov were the popular leaders. Slaveïkov was the orator whose first victory we have already seen in the defeat of the committee's report. His long struggle against the gentry, the Greek clergy and the Turkish rule had made opposition to privileged groups a second nature to him. His own contribution to the extremist cause was the prestige of his name and the caustic wit of his tongue which translated the nineteenth-century liberalism of Karavelov into the language of the people. Many years later, Karavelov paid tribute to his oratory, while admitting that he was not a debater. The arguments he had to borrow from others, but the forcefulness was his own. In Karavelov's words, ". . . the predominating qualities of his mental and moral physiognomy are common sense, moderation and true liberalism."<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> G. T. Danailov, "Petko Karavelov," *Godishnik na demokraticeskata partiya*, I (1905), 29-31; Iv. Georgov, "Zhivot i deïnost na Petko Karavelov" [The life and work of Petko Karavelov], *Petko Karavelov po sluchaï 25 godishninata ot negovata smïrt i 50 godishninata na bûlgarskata konstitutsiya* (Sofia, 1929), 9-17; Nikola Mushanov, "Petko Karavelov kato dÛrzhavnik i reformator" [Petko Karavelov as a statesman and a reformer], *ibid.*, 31.

<sup>37</sup> P. Karavelov, "Petko R. Slaveïkov," *Godishnik na demokraticeskata*

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

Dragan Tsankov was an entirely different sort of person. He was born in Svishtov on the Danube in 1828, and studied in Odessa, Kiev and Vienna, publishing a *Grammatik der bulgarischen Sprache* in the latter city in 1862. Not until five years later did he establish his printing press at the French Benedictine monastery in Constantinople, and for several years he took an active part in the church struggle. His attitude was noted for its Russophobia, for his relations with the Polish émigrés had given him the conviction that Russia would never permit the break-up of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Balkans. His leadership in the Uniate movement was thus quite patriotic, although for a few years it alienated him from the main body of Bulgarian feeling. Joining the Turkish civil service in 1863, he served in a number of capacities in Constantinople and in the Danube *vilayet* until 1876, when he resigned to devote himself entirely to the national cause. Impatient, stubborn and industrious, he was a politician rather than a statesman, organizing and rallying the deputies who had been impressed by Karavelov's scholarly arguments and won over by Slaveïkov's colorful oratory.<sup>38</sup>

The first change in the Organic Statute was proposed by Tsankov, and was symbolic of the spirit in which the assembly was to work. The name was changed from "Organic Statute" to "Constitution" so as to emphasize the fact that Bulgaria was an independent country. In a similar spirit the phrase in Article 3, which referred to Bulgaria as being in a position of vassal with respect to the Sublime Porte, was omitted. As there was no choice but to proceed

*partiya*, I (1905), 74, 66-75; R. Slaveïkov, *Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827—1895—1927. Oчерk za zhiвota mu i spomeni za nego* [Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827—1895—1927. A sketch of his life and recollections of him] (Sofia, 1927), 58.

<sup>38</sup> St. Chilingirov, "Dragan Tsankov," *Bŭlgarshi pisатели*, M. Arnaudov, ed. (6 vols.; Sofia, 1929-30), 173-196; Stefan S. Bobchev, "Dragan Tsankov," *Lѣtopis na bŭlgarskata akademiya na naukitѣ*, I (1911), 51-54.



## *The Constitutional Assembly*

with the work of the assembly, its members were determined to reduce to a minimum the stigma of the Treaty of Berlin. Similarly the powers of the prince were somewhat reduced by several measures. The first was proposed by M. D. Balabanov, a collaborator of Tsankov's in the last years of the independence movement, who occupied an undefined position between the two main groups in the assembly. At his suggestion, the prince's civil list was reduced from 1,000,000 francs to 600,000. Having received this encouragement, the assembly required no further urging to reject without discussion Article 35 of the Statute under which the National Assembly had the right to give the prince grants of the national territory.<sup>39</sup>

A warm debate took place over Article 38, which concerned the organization of the church. As we have already seen, this article was edited by Professor Drinov, and emphasized the dependence of the church in Bulgaria on the exarchate in Constantinople, giving the church the task of keeping up the spirit of national unity at a time when political unity had been rendered impossible. It was the idea of subordinating the Bulgarian church to the exarch that drew the opposition of some of the clerical deputies. Bishop Grigorii Dorostolochervenski was the leader of the attack, with an amended version of the article which admitted that the church in the principality was "a part of the general Bulgarian church" but refused to recognize any subordination to the exarch.<sup>40</sup>

This plea for an autonomous church appears to have been due to jealousies among the bishops. In the eyes of the extremists, who before the liberation had always opposed the tendency of the churchmen to compromise with their Greek and Turkish opponents, this new proposal seemed like a betrayal of the national cause. Their view

<sup>39</sup> *Protokolitě*, 165-166, 187, 193-194.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

was supported by Lukiyarov, Dondukov's deputy, who when called upon to interpret the Statute pointed out the advantages of Article 38 in its original form. But the bishops held their position and in the end a compromise was reached which admitted the connection with the national church, but which insisted that so far as administrative affairs were concerned the authority would rest with the Bulgarian Holy Synod. The extremists were given some satisfaction when the moderate Grekov admitted that in the statute which was to be worked out for the church, its relationship to the government would be more carefully defined. This concession, while not incorporated in the constitution, was later used by the nationalists in their campaign to subordinate the church to the ministry of foreign affairs and of public worship.<sup>41</sup>

The question of civil liberties came up at various times during the debates, but it is best discussed as a single problem. It was in matters of this sort, where the principles were absolute and the Western models could be adopted without reference to the local situation, that the truly liberal point of view obtained its greatest successes. Freedom of worship was already formulated in the Organic Statute in compliance with Article 5 of the Treaty of Berlin, the purpose of which was to protect the large Turkish minority which comprised a quarter of the population. The only restriction placed on religious freedom was that the performance of the rites should not violate any existing laws, and the additional condition that the pretext of religious scruples could not be used to demand exemption from any laws generally binding. While these aspects of religious freedom were accepted as a matter of course, a heated argument devel-

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-215; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 155-160; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 321-327; Ikonov, *op. cit.*, IV, 114; Hr. Vürgov, *Konstitutsiyata na bülgarškata pravoslavna tsürkva (Istoriya i razvoï na ekzarhüskiya ustav), 1871-1921* [The constitution of the Bulgarian Orthodox church (The history and development of the statute of the exarchate), 1871-1921] (Sofia, 1921), 24-28.

oped as the result of a proposal by six members that an article be introduced forbidding proselytizing. This aroused Slaveïkov to denounce this restriction as unnecessary and as an insult to the strength and prestige of the Orthodox Church. “. . . I favor the rejection of this proposal,” he said, “not because proselytizing is dangerous to the faith, but because it is an anachronism unbecoming to our faith. It would be a humiliation to include such a restriction in the constitution, because the signers of the proposal imply that our faith is in danger and that the constitution should protect it. Our faith was never in danger, even in the days when we had an uneducated clergy. . . .” The proposal was rejected.<sup>42</sup>

Concerning the ordinary rights of the citizens, democratic formulas were adopted with little opposition. Thus, all subjects were declared to be equal before the law and titles of nobility and rank were forbidden, although a special exception was made for a military order which the prince might establish. Civil rights were extended to all residents of the principality regardless of whether they were Bulgarian citizens. Reminiscent of Lamartine and the Second French Republic was a new article, added at Balabanov's suggestion, which prohibited slavery in Bulgaria. Provision for compulsory public education had already been made in the Organic Statute, but a long discussion developed as to the advisability of making education gratuitous as well. The real issue was whether the central or the local governments would support the schools, and many felt that the former would be committed to paying the whole bill if the constitution took a stand on the question. It was admitted, however, that no system of education was possible unless it were publicly supported, so in the end

<sup>42</sup> Gabriel Noradounghian, *Receuil d'actes internationaux de l'empire ottoman* (4 vols.; Paris, 1897-1903), IV, 178; *Protokolitž*, 216.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the term "gratuitous" was included and the details were left to be worked out in special legislation.<sup>43</sup>

The changes in the Organic Statute which most alarmed the outside world were those dealing with the freedom of the press and freedom of association. As for the former, the Russians had included an article which declared the press free, but added that those who misused this freedom would be responsible under the law. Long accustomed to the press restrictions of Turkey, Rumania and Serbia, the extremists were determined to free themselves from all shackles. To this end, an amended clause was proposed by Dr. G. Stranski which explicitly forbade censorship and control of any sort. At this point, the clergymen became alarmed, and demanded a special reservation permitting the Holy Synod to censor all books and publications touching on questions of faith and dogma. To this the extremists objected. Not only would such a provision do an injustice to Catholics and Protestants, but it was too broad in scope. Both Karavelov and Tsankov spoke against the proposal of the clergymen, but they finally gave in to the extent of admitting the censorship by the Holy Synod of religious books destined for use in Orthodox churches and schools. At the time, the bishops refused to compromise but during the second reading of the constitution they finally agreed.<sup>44</sup>

Freedom of association had received no consideration in the Organic Statute, and in the minds of many Russians the organization of nihilistic and revolutionary groups was a danger which no state could overlook. Freedom of assembly had already been accepted unanimously, and a proposal to this effect was now made in a form borrowed directly from the Belgian constitution which was most liberal in its for-

<sup>43</sup> *Protokolitê*, 221-223, 240-246.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 246-250, 321-322; Ikonomov, *op. cit.*, IV, 112; *Zornitsa*, IV, No. 18 (May 3/15, 1879), 70, the organ of the American missionaries, which supported the extremist interpretation of the freedom of the press.

mulation and required no control on the part of the government. When asked what he meant by the term "associations," the deputy who sponsored the amendment interpreted the term to include educational, scientific and commercial societies. He also expressed his willingness that financial and commercial associations should be regulated by the government. After only a brief discussion, the proposal was accepted in its original form. A good deal of opposition to this amendment was aroused outside of the assembly, however, and when it came to the second reading there was a long debate on the subject. The extremists admitted that the associations could not be left entirely without governmental control, and suggested an additional clause stating that ". . . the object pursued and the means employed by these associations be not prejudicial to public order, religion, or good morals."<sup>45</sup> Slaveïkov and Tsankov were both anxious lest this procedure set a precedent and that many other provisions would be restricted in a similar manner, but in the end the compromise was accepted. In view of the strong opposition to any mention of associations the inclusion of this article, even in its modified form, must be regarded as a victory for the extremists.<sup>46</sup>

Of all the debates, however, that which took place in connection with the proposal that a Senate be added to the National Assembly was by far the most important. Here, for the first time, both points of view were carefully prepared beforehand and presented in formal speeches. The supporters of "moderate conservatism" brought all their pressure to bear in favor of the Senate which, if introduced, would have counterbalanced all of the guarantees of pop-

<sup>45</sup> *Protokolitě*, 315.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 251, 313-319; G. Bakalov, "Russkaya revolyutsionnaya emigratsiya sredi bolgar. II. Ot osvobozhdeniya do soedineniya dvuh Bolgarii (1878-1885 g.g.)" [Russian revolutionary émigrés among the Bulgarians. II. From the liberation to the union of the two Bulgarias (1878-1885)], *Katorga i ssylka*, LXIV (1930), 105-106.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

ular control which the extremists had thus far been successful in achieving. Before the formal debate took place, the question was widely discussed in the private meetings. D. Grekov, K. Stoilov and T. Ikonov were the chief supporters of the Senate in these preliminary discussions and the arguments they used were the traditional ones which pointed to the wisdom of having a body of experienced and responsible statesmen to serve as a check on the boisterous and at times thoughtless politicians of the National Assembly. Opposing the Senate were Karavelov and Slaveikov, reinforced by Stefan N. Stambolov. The latter, too young to be a member of the Constitutional Assembly, devoted all of his time to the unofficial debates where he showed the energy which was later to characterize him in public life. In this case, he argued that Bulgaria had no elder statesmen, diplomats or generals who would be eligible for such a body. If a further check was needed on the assembly in addition to the prince's veto, he suggested a provision requiring all bills to be published six months before being introduced into the legislature, and prohibiting laws from being repealed within less than five years of their passage.<sup>47</sup>

But the members of the Constitutional Assembly were in no mood to compromise when the formal debates opened on March 27/April 8. The first speech was that of Todor Ikonov, who had carefully prepared his arguments in collaboration with the other moderates. A Senate, he said, would be to the country's advantage from several points of view. In the first place, the national interest would be served because of the check which would be placed on any individual motives and interests which might dominate the assembly. In the second place, the legislation would receive more careful scrutiny if subjected to the examination of two bodies than it would if only the assembly were responsible. These were the conventional

<sup>47</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 61-62.

## *The Constitutional Assembly*

arguments in favor of an upper house and they were undoubtedly very much to the point in the case of Bulgaria where the few with a legal education would have a hard time making their influence felt in a single assembly. Somewhat less obvious was Ikonomov's suggestion that an upper house would serve as a link between the legislative and the executive branches of the government. But his weakest argument was that the Senate would represent the national will. The difficulty here lay in the fact that in Bulgaria there was no obvious class or group which the Senate could represent. There was neither a hereditary upper class as in England, nor a federal problem as in the United States, nor a large group of elder statesmen as in France. To get around this difficulty, then, Ikonomov tried to argue that the will of the people, the intangible force of public opinion, would be represented by the upper house. The implication was that the assembly would be dominated by personal interests and jealousies, and this was indeed the trend of most of the arguments of the moderates. The effect of this attack on the integrity of popularly elected representatives was to arouse the antagonism of the assembly, and the speech met with a very cool reception.<sup>48</sup>

In his desire to see the question of the Senate debated in a thorough manner, with all the arguments presented to the assembly, Ikonomov had given a copy of his speech to Slaveïkov beforehand in the expectation that the latter would attempt to answer his arguments directly. In this he was disappointed, for the strength of the extremists lay in popular enthusiasm rather than in closely reasoned arguments. Their tactics were at their best during this crucial debate, for the groundwork had been prepared by Karavelov before the assembly, and Slaveïkov's speech was little more than an adaptation of the ideas of his more scholarly

<sup>48</sup> *Protokolitě*, 252-256; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 63; Detchko Karadjow, *Contre le système d'une chambre unique on Bulgarie* (Paris, 1927), 26-30.



## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

colleague. Tsankov's role was that of a floor leader, and before the day was over he rendered an important service to the cause. Slaveïkov started out with the warning that Bulgaria should not try to imitate the institutions of other countries blindly, but should examine them in every case to make sure that they fitted the Bulgarian situation. In this case, the fact that most foreign constitutions made provision for a Senate or a Council of State was of little importance, because it was obvious that there was no place for those institutions in a country with so homogeneous and democratic a population as Bulgaria's. The one great guarantee of strength lay, he said, not in the establishment of special boards to serve as checks on the assembly, but in the direct control of public affairs by the people. If Ikonomov feared that a popularly elected assembly would be dominated by hot-headed youths and by personal ambitions, he was making a great mistake. The one danger, he admitted, was that ". . . the assembly might at some time be flooded by the most unruly people in the world, the lawyers. . . . It is the good fortune of our people and of our national assembly that we are not yet afflicted with this disease. . . . But I do not deny that these locusts may soon start breeding here."<sup>49</sup>

This attack on the lawyers was aimed directly at the moderates, one of whose leaders had practiced law in the Bulgarian colonies in Rumania, and it was taken as the signal for a major disturbance in the assembly. One eyewitness, a friend of Slaveïkov, claims that the moderates had prepared the demonstration beforehand. Instead of sitting in their usual seats, some of the leading members sat among the peasants with the intention of urging them to leave the hall when the time came. Slaveïkov's reference to the lawyers immediately brought shouts of protest from

<sup>49</sup> *Protokolitë*, 256-262; Danailov, "Petko Karavelov," *Godishnik na demokraticeskata partiya*, I (1905), 30-31; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 73-75.



## *The Constitutional Assembly*

the floor and when Karavelov, who was presiding, tried to restore order he was shouted down. The clergymen and the moderate leaders then started a movement towards the exits, and for a while it looked as though the debate would be effectively boycotted. But at the crucial moment Tsankov shouted to the members to keep their seats, and before long Slaveïkov was able to continue his speech in the absence of the moderate leaders.<sup>50</sup>

Slaveïkov had already made his main points, and the rest of his speech was devoted to urging a greater confidence in the common man. This was perhaps the best statement ever made by the extremist group on the subject of popular sovereignty, and their view cannot be explained otherwise than as the result of the long centuries of domination by a small group of Turkish officials. To them, control by the privileged few was the evil against which the whole revolutionary movement had been directed and they insisted that the constitution guarantee the complete freedom of the people to solve their own problems. Only in this way can Slaveïkov's distrust of the moderates be explained. He maintained that the country would be much better off ". . . in the hands of the people, who bear its burdens and who know what needs to be changed, than under the privileged citizens who, in spite of their good intentions, have a hard time discovering what is wrong and how it can be helped, and in the end you find that they have scratched it in places where it does not itch. Leave the people alone to seek the cures for the ailments which they feel, and be assured that they will waste no time in finding them and applying them."<sup>51</sup> Reassured by this simple and straightforward view of democratic government, and finding that

<sup>50</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 64; *Protokolitě*, 262.

<sup>51</sup> *Protokolitě*, 266.

none of the moderate leaders had remained behind to continue the debate, the proposal for the introduction of the Senate was soon defeated.<sup>52</sup>

The moderates were not easily reconciled to the failure of their attempt to limit the powers of the National Assembly, and their dismay was increased on the following day when Article 79 of the Organic Statute, dealing with the membership of the National Assembly, was revised to make it entirely elective.<sup>53</sup> At the end of the sitting, sixteen of them handed in a petition to the president of the assembly protesting that very important decisions had been made without sufficient discussion, but it had no effect. Their point of view is understandable in the light of Ikononov's accusation that both Tsankov and Karavelov used underhand methods against him, the former by influencing several deputies with the promises of jobs, and the latter by promising to reserve a full day for the discussion of the subject and then taking the vote before the subject had been exhausted.<sup>54</sup> It is doubtful whether the extremists felt the necessity of rushing the proceedings, as they could feel confident of a safe majority, but Tsankov's later career leaves no doubt but that he would have been willing to use arguments other than scholarly had he thought it necessary.

On the other hand, the accusation that the moderates had tried to prevent the assembly from taking the vote is based on more solid evidence. For the next three sittings the assembly was unable to obtain a quorum, and it was April 7/19 before it could proceed with the examination of the Organic Statute.<sup>55</sup> With the extremists in control of

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 262-268; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 64-66; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 76-79; Vladikin, *op. cit.*, 164-166.

<sup>53</sup> *Protokolitě*, 271-274.

<sup>55</sup> *Protokolitě*, 285-289.

<sup>54</sup> Ikononov, *op. cit.*, IV, 112-113.

## *The Constitutional Assembly*

the assembly, and with the powers eager to see the constitution established at the earliest possible moment, the moderates had no choice but to give in. But they were not reconciled to their defeat, and nurtured a hope that the assembly would see the evil of its ways. "For the honor of the nation, for the good of the young Bulgarian state," as one of the moderates put it, "we desire and we hope that this scandal was the result of a temporary distraction and that the assembly, after more mature deliberation, will arrive at a clearer conception of the decision which it made, perhaps without at first understanding its significance."<sup>56</sup>

The last echo of this problem for the duration of the Constitutional Assembly came with the discussion of Article 141 of the Organic Statute which provided for a Council of State. This institution was meant to be a board of experts rather than a check on the rights of the assembly, but too much feeling had already been aroused to permit the passage of a measure which would seem like a concession to the moderates. Even Slaveïkov admitted that there was a certain need for a board which would be responsible for the technical aspects of drawing up legislation, but he doubted whether a sufficient number of experienced men could be found.<sup>57</sup>

The last important measure to be passed was an electoral law for the election of the assembly which was to choose a prince under Article 3 of the Treaty of Berlin. The bill, which was prepared by Hristo Stoyanov and passed without discussion, was meant only as a temporary measure. As it turned out, however, it was destined to set the style for Bulgarian electoral procedure for some time to come. On

<sup>56</sup> *Maritsa*, II, No. 70 (March 30/April 11, 1879), 3; published in Philipopolis, Eastern Rumelia, the *Maritsa* was strong in support of the moderate point of view.

<sup>57</sup> *Protokolitë*, 294-298.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

April 16/28 the deputies and the foreign representatives signed the constitution, and the Constitutional Assembly was dissolved.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Noradounghian, *op. cit.*, IV, 177-178; *Protokolitě*, 335-336; *Almanah na bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya (po sluchai sŭzdavane tretoto bŭlgarsko tsarstvo)* [Almanac of the Bulgarian constitution (on the occasion of the founding of the third Bulgarian kingdom)] (Plovdiv, 1911), 358-361; M. K. Sarafov, "Nashitě legislativni izbori" [Our legislative elections], *Periodichesko spisanie*, IV, No. 16 (1885), 28-32.

## CHAPTER V. THE CONSTITUTION AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES

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### THE TIRNOVO CONSTITUTION OF 1879

THE final text of the constitution which was so hastily drafted and discussed bore many traces of the inexperience of the members of the Constitutional Assembly and of the negligence of the technical advisers provided by the Russian government. Many of the terms used are inappropriate, the chapters are illogically arranged, and there are a number of repetitions. Some relatively unimportant matters received a great deal of attention in the assembly, while others of considerable importance were passed without discussion. In spite of these faults, however, the constitution succeeded in describing in some detail the chief organs of state and the powers attributed to them. On these important points the assembly knew its mind, and it emphasized them at the expense of technical matters which it had neither the time nor the interest to work out. The constitution as a whole was distinguished by the delegation of large powers to an assembly elected by universal suffrage, and by the enumeration of civil liberties. In adopting the parliamentary form of government and the principle of the separation of powers it followed the liberal European tradition, and its main features are best presented by describing the executive, legislative and judicial powers, the guarantee of civil liberties and certain other provisions which were soon to be the subject of controversy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stefan G. Balamezov, *Sravnitelno i búlgarsko konstitutsionno pravo* [Comparative and Bulgarian constitutional law] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1938), I, 73-74; S. Kirov, *Kratúk kurs po búlgarsko konstitutsionno pravo* [A brief course in Bulgarian constitutional law] (Sofia, 1920), 9-10; Emmanoil Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare et ses principes* (Paris, 1926), 11-16; in

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Throughout its history it was one of the paradoxes of the Constitution of Tirnovo that, while it was certainly the intention of its founders to place the sovereign power in the hands of the people, the prince was frequently able to assert his authority. To a certain extent, of course, this may be accounted for by the prestige of the prince as a foreigner and by the inexperience and indecisiveness of the assembly. But the ultimate reason for the strength of the prince's position lay in the use which he was able to make of his constitutional powers. Invested with the executive power, one of the most important duties of the prince was connected with the National Assembly which he convoked, opened and closed.<sup>2</sup> The sessions were to last from October 15 to December 15 of each year, but the prince was given the further right of proroguing the assembly without its consent for a period not exceeding two months, or of dissolving it.<sup>3</sup> In the case of dissolution by the prince, however, new elections were to be held within two months and the new assembly convoked within four.<sup>4</sup> The uses which a resolute prince could make of these powers became evident during the first constitutional crisis. As chief executive, the prince also confirmed and published all laws passed by the National Assembly, represented the state at home and abroad, concluded treaties with foreign countries, served as com-

contrast to the other authorities, Aleksandŭr Girginov, *Dŭrzhavnoto ustroistvo na Bŭlgariya* [The structure of the Bulgarian government] (Sofia, 1921), 78-83, denies that the principle of the separation of powers is applied in the Tirnovo Constitution, by which he apparently means that the separation is partial rather than absolute; briefer descriptions of the constitution may be found in Peter Schischkoff, *Aufbau des bulgarischen Staates* (Leipzig, 1928), *passim*; S. Balamezov, *La constitution de Tirnovo*, "La Bulgarie d'aujourd'hui, No. 10" (Sofia, 1925), 3-24; Slawtscho Metscheff, *Grundzüge des bulgarischen Verfassungsrechts* (Göttingen, 1929), *passim*; and Amadeo Giannini, *Le costituzioni degli stati dell'Europa orientale* (2 vols.; Rome, 1929), I, 55-96; see also *idem*, "La costituzione Bulgara," *L'Europa orientale*, X (1930), 133-163.

<sup>2</sup> Articles 12, 127, 128 and 130; the articles of the constitution hereafter cited may be found in the text which is attached as an appendix, 291-309.

<sup>3</sup> Articles 127, 135 and 136.

<sup>4</sup> Article 137.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

mander-in-chief of the armed forces and appointed cabinet ministers and all state officials.<sup>5</sup>

The participation of the prince in the legislative branch was also significant. He shared the legislative power with the National Assembly<sup>6</sup> and, by virtue of his duty of confirming all bills passed by the legislature,<sup>7</sup> it has been claimed that he had the right of veto. Theoretically, the only restriction to this power of veto was the provision that all laws must be confirmed before the end of the legislative session.<sup>8</sup> In practice, however, it immediately became a question of ministerial responsibility, for the cabinet would either side with the prince and advise him to dissolve the assembly, or would support the assembly and hand in its resignation.<sup>9</sup> In judicial matters, the prince was granted the power of pardoning or of commuting sentences in criminal cases, but in cases of treason he shared the right of amnesty with the assembly.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to defining the constitutional powers of the prince, the constitution paid a great deal of attention to the details of his position. The impression which one gets is that great care had to be exercised to keep the prince under control. The residence of the prince, the succession to the throne, the regents, the guardians of a minor prince, the civil list and the religious beliefs of the prince's family were all carefully defined, and these limitations stand out in sharp contrast to the powers which he was accorded in state affairs.<sup>11</sup> It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the

<sup>5</sup> Articles 3, 10, 17 and 163; see also Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 34-36; Kirov, *op. cit.*, 26-27; Girginov, *op. cit.*, 230-235.

<sup>6</sup> Article 9.

<sup>7</sup> Articles 10, 45 and 120.

<sup>8</sup> Article 109.

<sup>9</sup> Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 219-221, and Kirov, *op. cit.*, 24-25, avoid a direct discussion of the prince's power of veto, whereas Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 38-39, insists that the prince's veto is absolute.

<sup>10</sup> Articles 19, 15 and 16.

<sup>11</sup> Articles 19-36, and 38; Kirov, *op. cit.*, 29-31; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 40-45; Girginov, *op. cit.*, 235-236; L. Vladikin, "Bŭlgarskoto pres-

real intention of the makers of the constitution was to limit the prince insofar as possible, and that they did not foresee the extent to which the political rights which they gave him could be used in supporting a policy in divergence with that of the assembly.

The powers granted to the prince could only be exercised through the ministers, whom he appointed and discharged.<sup>12</sup> The six ministers were charged with the general administration of the country, one of their number being chosen by the prince as president of the Council of Ministers with the title of minister-president.<sup>13</sup> In case the prince should in any way be incapacitated, full executive power was vested in the Council of Ministers.<sup>14</sup> The caution and hesitation with which the ministers were granted these powers is emphasized by a series of articles providing for the prosecution of ministers accused of high treason, violation of the constitution or the neglect of their duties, the whole procedure being placed in the hands of the assembly.<sup>15</sup> The principle of ministerial responsibility was specifically emphasized in several articles of the constitution,<sup>16</sup> but it nevertheless became one of the first subjects of controversy when the constitution was put into practice. The differences of opinion could not, however, be laid to any lack of clarity on the part of the constitutional text, for the ministers were responsible collectively for the acts of the prince and of the Council of Ministers, and individually for the separate ministries.<sup>17</sup>

The chief organ of state established under the constitution was the "talonasledie" [Succession to the throne in Bulgaria], *Yuridicheski pregled*, I (1929), 305-341, 439-474, *passim*; L. Vladikin, "Kak chl. 7 dopŭlva chl. 24 ot nashata konstitutsiya" [How Article 7 completes Article 24 of our constitution], *Yuridicheski arhiv*, II (1930), 28-32.

<sup>12</sup> Articles 149 and 152.

<sup>13</sup> Articles 150, 160, 161 and 162.

<sup>14</sup> Article 151.

<sup>15</sup> Articles 155-159.

<sup>16</sup> Articles 18, 153, 154 and 156.

<sup>17</sup> Kirov, *op. cit.*, 37-43; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 56-64; Girginov, *op. cit.*, 270-284; Balamezov, *op. cit.*, I, 351-354.



## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

tion was the national representation, which was expressed through the ordinary National Assembly and the Grand National Assembly.<sup>18</sup> This division of the people's representatives into two types of assemblies, as opposed to a single parliament with two houses, was borrowed from the Serbian Constitution of 1869 and was one of the less successful adaptations although the distinction between the legislative and the constitutional powers which the two assemblies represented is a logical one. The legislative power in the strict sense of the term belonged to the ordinary National Assembly, which had in addition the customary control of the budget and other financial questions, and of the executive branch of the government.<sup>19</sup> It was the chief distinction of this legislative assembly, and it remained for many years the wonder of Western Europe, that the members were elected by universal manhood suffrage in the proportion of one for every ten thousand inhabitants. A minimum age of twenty-one years and the enjoyment of civil and political rights were the only electoral qualifications, and any elector of thirty years of age was eligible for office. A three-year term was specified, but the details of electoral procedure were left for a special law.<sup>20</sup>

This liberal conception of a legislative assembly was not restricted to the formal aspects of its composition, but included detailed arrangements for the freedom of opinion and immunity of its members as well as a specific provision that the deputies could not be bound by instructions from their electors but on the contrary represented the entire nation.<sup>21</sup> The presentation and discussion of bills was regulated in such a way as to give the assembly full protection both against pressure from mobs and organized crowds and against any attempt of the executive branch to influence or control the free discussion of bills proposed by

<sup>18</sup> Article 85.

<sup>20</sup> Article 86.

<sup>19</sup> Articles 105 and 119-126.

<sup>21</sup> Articles 87 and 93-97.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the government.<sup>22</sup> The only checks on the National Assembly were the right of the prince and his ministers to prorogue or dissolve it, a check which was only effective for a period of two months,<sup>23</sup> and the inability of the assembly to convene without the consent of the prince.<sup>24</sup> The power of the government over the legislature was, however, limited to these measures and the deputies were granted the right both to initiate legislation and to amend bills presented by the government.<sup>25</sup>

The functions of the Grand National Assembly were quite distinct from those of the legislative body, although its composition differed only in the fact that it had twice as many members.<sup>26</sup> It could be convoked by the prince either for the purpose of approving a cession or an exchange of territory, or for amending the constitution.<sup>27</sup> In the latter case, the approval of two-thirds of the members of the larger assembly was required after the proposal had been sanctioned by the ordinary assembly.<sup>28</sup> The regency could convoke the assembly only for its approval of cessions or exchanges of territory, whereas the council of ministers could convoke it either for the purpose of electing a new prince, for which a majority of two-thirds of the members was required, or for electing regents.<sup>29</sup> It was through these two assemblies that the sovereignty of the people was exercised, and the constitution went as far as it could to grant them a large measure of control over the executive branch.<sup>30</sup> The one great exception to this concentration of power in the hands of the people was Article 47, which provided that in case of a national emergency at a time when

<sup>22</sup> Articles 102-104, 112 and 113.

<sup>24</sup> Article 138.

<sup>25</sup> Articles 108-111; Kirov, *op. cit.*, 54-67; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 72-93.

<sup>26</sup> Article 144.

<sup>28</sup> Articles 167-169.

<sup>30</sup> Kirov, *op. cit.*, 69-71; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 107-116.

<sup>23</sup> Articles 135, 136 and 137.

<sup>27</sup> Articles 140 and 141.

<sup>29</sup> Articles 142 and 143.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

the National Assembly is not in session the prince, through the Council of Ministers, should have the power to issue ordinances having the force of law. These ordinances had to be submitted, however, to the next regular National Assembly, and could in no case involve the imposition of taxes.<sup>81</sup>

The provisions made for the judicial branch of government were among the weakest features of the whole constitution, and this is largely accounted for by the fact that the Russian provisional administration had already laid the groundwork for a judicial system at the time of the Constitutional Assembly. The only direct mention of the judicial power states that the courts act in the name of the prince, and that the details of their organization will be provided for by special legislation.<sup>82</sup> This is supplemented by a provision that military courts have jurisdiction only over persons in active military service,<sup>83</sup> and by a guarantee that no person shall receive a sentence except by a competent court.<sup>84</sup> No mention is made, however, of the independence of the judiciary. The interpretation of the laws and the control over their enactment was placed in the hands of the National Assembly,<sup>85</sup> although the Grand National Assembly was given no similar rights with regard to the constitution itself. The constitutionality of the content of the laws, as opposed to their form, was left without check and the courts, conforming with continental European practice, have made no attempt to assume the power of judicial review.<sup>86</sup>

The provisions made in the constitution for the guaran-

<sup>81</sup> Article 48; Kirov, *op. cit.*, 33-34; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 47-49; Detchko Karadjow, *Contre le système d'une chambre unique en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1927), 55; Charalamby Angelow, *Das bulgarische Staatsrecht im allgemeinen, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Volksvertretung* (Freiburg, 1896), *passim*.

<sup>82</sup> Article 13.

<sup>83</sup> Article 72.

<sup>84</sup> Article 73.

<sup>85</sup> Articles 44 and 49.

<sup>86</sup> Kirov, *op. cit.*, 34-37; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 97-100, 139-142.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

teeing of civil liberties were sufficiently discussed in the previous chapter to make it evident that the makers of the constitution were little short of pedantic in their enumeration of the rights of the citizens. The only duties which were demanded of the citizens were the payment of taxes, military service and elementary education.<sup>37</sup> In this regard, the members of the Constitutional Assembly were eager to adopt the practice of the most enlightened of the Western European states.<sup>38</sup> But if the constitution guaranteed the rights of the citizens, what assurance was there that the constitution itself would not be violated? Such guarantees were indeed slight, and so far as the text of the constitution itself was concerned the oaths of office required of the prince and of all public officials was all that it had to offer.<sup>39</sup> By analogy with the constitutional practice of Western countries it has been argued that ministerial responsibility, the control of the National Assembly over its own legislation and the competition of a party system all offer strong guarantees against the violation of the constitution regardless of the existence of judicial review.<sup>40</sup> With regard to the Tirnovo Constitution, however, one cannot escape the conclusion that the text itself offered few guarantees that its provisions would be observed, and that its strict observance depended chiefly on the sincerity and integrity of the prince, and of the members of the ministerial council and of the National Assembly.

Before concluding this brief description of the Tirnovo Constitution, it is necessary to emphasize a fact which has been pointed out by a distinguished Bulgarian professor

<sup>37</sup> Articles 69, 71 and 78.

<sup>38</sup> See above, 90-93; Kirov, *op. cit.*, 82-126; Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 120-135.

<sup>39</sup> Articles 34 and 164.

<sup>40</sup> Zlatanoff, *La constitution bulgare*, 137-139; St. Balamezov, "Garantsiitē na konstitutsionnoto i na parlamentarnoto upravlenie" [The guarantees of constitutional and of parliamentary government], *Godishnik na Sofiiskiya universitet. III Yuridicheski fakultet*, XII (1915-16), 1-26.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

of constitutional law, namely, that this constitution was not as liberal or as democratic either as its reputation would lead one to expect or as the extremist members of the Constitutional Assembly tried to make it. The broad powers given to the freely elected members of the assembly, and the general impression that the whole document was based on the Belgian Constitution of 1831 left a halo of liberalism around the Bulgarian text. We have already seen that the chief model used was that of the Serbian Constitution of 1869, which was based on the Prussian Constitution of 1850, and even the many revisions made in the Constitutional Assembly left the final version in many respects less advanced with regard to the emphasis on popular sovereignty than were the constitutions of Belgium, Rumania and Greece. All three of these documents, for instance, stated specifically that the sovereign power resides in the people, that the monarch may exercise only those powers delegated to him and that the assembly meets annually at a given date without being convoked by the monarch. The Belgian and Rumanian constitutions went even further by providing that the constitution may not be suspended under any circumstances. The Constitution of Tirnovo contained none of these restrictions on the executive power, and the refusal to include a Senate or a Council of State may be attributed as much to the ignorance of the extremists as to their desire to assure the democratic stamp of the government.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> St. G. Balamezov, "Balkanskitě konstitutsii kato iztochnitsi na proekta za bŭlgarska konstitutsiya" [The Balkan constitutions as sources of the draft of the Bulgarian constitution], *Rodina*, I (1938-39), 86-92; St. G. Balamezov, "Děloto na nashitě uchrediteli v světlinata na dneshnoto vreme" [The work of our founders in the light of the present day], *Rodina*, I (1938-39), 98-109; the claim that the Bulgarian constitution was the most liberal in Europe at the time of its adoption is made by P. Milyukov, *Bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya* [The Bulgarian constitution] (Salonica, 1905), 14; and Lyubomir Vladikin, *Istoriya na tŭrnovskata konstitutsiya* [History of the Constitution of Tirnovo] (Sofia, 1936), 170-172.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Whatever the technical faults of the Tirnovo Constitution, however, two points are clear: that it was the sincere intention of the members of the Constitutional Assembly to place the sovereign power in the hands of the national representatives, and that the powers of government were distributed in such a way that the National Assembly was given a dominant position. But to understand the actual application of the constitution it is necessary to examine the nature of the political parties, the personality and views of the prince, and such factors as the aims and influence of the various foreign powers for whom the conduct of the Bulgarian government was a matter of some importance.

### THE POLITICAL PARTIES

DISCUSSING the emergence of political parties in Bulgaria, an anonymous commentator remarked in the spring of 1879 that, while in theory one should start from two opposing views in order to reach the truth, “. . . with us, opposing views are not regarded as a means of attaining a given end, but instead frequently result in a personal feeling which becomes an endless personal feud, particularly dangerous for us at this time.”<sup>42</sup> This was a pessimistic view of the situation for, while political parties in the Balkan states have traditionally been based on personal cliques and antagonisms, this was not the case in Bulgaria in the period between the Treaty of Berlin and the union of Bulgaria with Eastern Rumelia.

Why this period should have been distinctive in this respect is not difficult to understand. A great deal of idealism had been developed during the last years of the struggle against the Turkish rule, and even the crushing of the national territorial aspirations by the Treaty of Berlin was

<sup>42</sup> P., “Bělěžhka vürhu nashitě bratya v Sěverna Bŭlgariya” [A note on our brothers in Northern Bulgaria], *Bŭlgarsko zname*, I, 14 (May 12/24, 1879), 1.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

not enough to destroy the constructive desire to create a well-organized state. It might even be said that, after the first disappointment had been overcome in the winter of 1878 and 1879, the task of achieving national union served as a unifying force in Bulgarian politics and provided a basis of coöperation among the various groups which might otherwise have seen no reason to work together. This fact was quite clear during the Constitutional Assembly, and was reported to the British Foreign Office by W. Gifford Palgrave. "It is . . . certain," he noted, "that the diversity of opinion between the Ultras and the moderates regards the means solely, not the ends; as also that of these ends the incorporation of Eastern Roumelia is the chief. And hence, as is evident, the extremely critical nature of the situation: since any serious disturbance or even any highly unpopular measure taken south of the Balkans may, at the present moment, wholly upset the equilibrium in Bulgaria itself, and unite Moderates and Ultras alike in one common and dangerous outcry."<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, to say that the Union of 1885 was the chief cause of the disintegration of the Bulgarian political parties because it removed the important centripetal force of a national aim would certainly be an exaggeration. Such a theory fails to take into consideration the centrifugal forces of the economic and diplomatic influence of the imperialist powers, and at the same time underestimates the economic developments within the country itself. It seems evident that Palgrave, in his eagerness to emphasize the danger that the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Berlin might be challenged at an early date, failed to report certain important divisions of opinion in Bulgaria which the international situation tended to minimize. Nothing could be further from the truth than the assertion of one commentator that the early adoption of the names Con-

<sup>48</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 23, Tirnovo, March 1, 1879.



servative and Liberal ". . . which was a perfunctory imitation of England's party nomenclature, was not warranted by social realities. . . . There were no traditions and no vested interests to defend . . .," and that the division was ". . . based mainly on differences of temperament, age and outlook."<sup>44</sup>

As a matter of fact, the contrary was the case. In spite of a general agreement that Bulgaria's one great aim was to regain the boundaries of San Stefano, there were two contrasting points of view both as to how this aim should be attained and as to which groups within the country should hold the political power. Had he not been so alert to the dangers of a Russian plot, the British representative would certainly have drawn the conclusion from his observations during the Constitutional Assembly that such agreement as existed among the members was almost entirely confined to the realm of foreign policy. The division of the members into two distinct parties is, however, more easy of detection than it is of analysis. On what issues did these two groups find themselves in disagreement even during a time of national emergency? The main issues may be discussed under three headings: traditional, constitutional and economic.

One source of division, the roots of which lay deep in the past, was the traditional hatred on the part of the bulk of the people of being dominated by a small privileged group. In the Constitutional Assembly the extremists, or Liberals as they soon came to be called, were uncompromising in their opposition to any proposal which seemed to

<sup>44</sup> T. Tchitchovsky, "Political and social aspects of modern Bulgaria," *The Slavonic Review*, VII (1929), 275; W. N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and after, a diplomatic history of the Near Eastern Settlement, 1878-1880* (London, 1938), 255, also discounts the validity of the party titles on the ground that ". . . no social interest existed to form the basis of defence and reform; . . ." but he admits that "Some evidence of a social or economic basis of division can, however, be seen in the discussion over the necessity for a second chamber; . . ."



## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

imply the restriction of popular freedom. This sentiment was a part of the heritage of the Turkish era, and it was nourished by the radical political thought of Russia and of Western Europe. It was the radicalism of Rakovski, Lyuben Karavelov and Botïov which now reappeared within the framework of a parliamentary regime. Direct and uncompromising is the testimony in a party newspaper:

“. . . we have two parties, one of these is the large national party which created our liberal constitution and which is supported by the whole nation. . . . The other is the conservative, or rather the obscurantist, microscopic party which always has tried and which always will try to restrict the rights and liberties of the people. . . . The whole nation is behind the national party, but the obscurantist party is supported only by those suspicious characters who in Turkish times sucked the sweat of the people and profited from their hardships and suffering.”<sup>45</sup>

While the facts on which he bases his attack on the “obscurantists” are undoubtedly exaggerated, Stambolov’s view accurately represented the feelings of the younger Liberals. They were willing to let the Conservatives help in winning back the lost province, but the control must always remain in the hands of the people. The Conservatives were equally bitter in their attacks. Describing the two parties in their organ which was published in Eastern Rumelia, they referred to their opponents as being half-educated, mediocre presidents of courts and of local councils who listened to the speakers who shouted the loudest and who represented a false type of liberalism. The moderates, on the other hand, were the intelligent and experienced leaders, many of whom were scholars or statesmen.<sup>46</sup> In their relations with Russia, the two parties shifted sides many times during the course of the five years after they came into being.

<sup>45</sup> *Tsëlokupna Bülğariya*, I, 9 (July 25/August 6, 1879), 1.

<sup>46</sup> *Maritsa*, II, No. 71 (April 6/18, 1879), 5-6.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

It is safe to say, however, that on general principles the Liberals were suspicious of official Russia whereas the Conservatives were willing to lend it their support. Insofar as the Russians represented authority and discipline as opposed to the rule of the people, they could count on the support of the Conservatives.<sup>47</sup>

During the earlier days of the Constitutional Assembly before either the constitutional or the economic differences between the two groups had become crystallized, it was this traditional division of the Bulgarian leaders which predominated. As in the struggle for ecclesiastical independence there had been one group which favored compromise and another which favored a complete break with the patriarchate, and as in the struggle against Turkish rule some had preached revolution and others would have been satisfied with a guarantee of law and order, so after the liberation there was one group which preferred to compromise cautiously with Russia and the powers and another which openly preached the overthrow of the Treaty of Berlin. The men who had taken an active part in the underground revolutionary movement which had provoked the Turkish government to severe measures in 1878 were unwilling that their countrymen who had opposed them at that time and who had on some occasions betrayed them to the Turkish police should be permitted any important share in the new government. Similarly, the few large landowners and the more numerous merchants who had made a comfortable living by supplying the Turkish market with a number of important commodities were as anxious now

<sup>47</sup> G. Bakalov, "Russkaya revolyutsionnaya emigratsiya sredi bolgar. II. Ot osvobozhdeniya do soedineniya dvuh Bolgarii (1878-1885 g.g.)" [Russian revolutionary émigrés among the Bulgarians. II. From the liberation to the union of the two Bulgarias (1878-1885)], *Katorga i Ssylka*, LXIV (1930), 106-108.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

as they had been under the Turkish regime to see that the reins of authority were in firm and responsible hands.<sup>48</sup>

It would be a mistake, however, to lay too great an emphasis on the role played by the traditional grievances in the division of opinion between the Liberal and the Conservative parties. Conditions had changed so completely since the days when the Greeks and the Turks were the national enemies that a division based only on the old antagonisms would not have survived the liberation for very long. Yet the differences between the two groups were sufficiently profound to maintain, and even to increase, their old intensity using the new national problems as the basis of controversy. The first important issue was whether or not the Constitutional Assembly should be held at all and that, as we have seen, was solved in favor of the moderate view thanks largely to the pressure of the signers of the Treaty of Berlin. Aside from the traditional disagreement, the great issues which absorbed the interest of the politicians and the publicists during this period were constitutional. Beyond the immediate issues discussed, there were economic factors which would undoubtedly have led the same groups to find an outlet for their discontent in other issues had not the constitution been the chief national problem at the time. To understand the nature of the political parties which appeared in liberated Bulgaria, then, we must examine in the first place, the stand which they took on the constitutional issues and, in the second, the economic factors arising from the liberation which influenced the social and political problems of the country.

Palgrave, whose first impression had been that the two groups were in essential agreement and differed only in

<sup>48</sup> D. Marinov, *Stefan Stambolov i nověshata ni istoriya (Lětopisni spomeni i ocherki)* [Stefan Stambolov and our recent history (Chronological recollections and sketches)] (Sofia, 1909), 57; Yurdan Yurdanov, *Bŭlgarskiya liberalizŭm (Pogled vŭrhu nasheto politichesko minalo)* [Bulgarian liberalism (A glance at our political past)] (Sofia, 1926), 3-7.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

age and in temperament,<sup>49</sup> soon came to realize that the split was more profound and that it was the constitutional issues which aroused the most heated discussion. "The parties themselves," he reported, "are beginning to assume the distinctive and definite colourings that will probably long distinguish them. The so-called Conservative has in view the extension of the Administrative or Executive Power, and, though covertly, of the Princely Prerogative; the so-called Liberal, that of the Legislative or Representative authority. . . . Personal motives, love of power or place, and the like, have doubtless much to do in the struggle now commencing; but below all these there is a real divergency of principles at work, and it is likely to widen as time goes on. The general feeling of the country is certainly with the Liberals."<sup>50</sup>

While the British representative was undoubtedly inclined to favor the Liberals because he regarded them as a bulwark of anti-Russian feeling, his testimony with regard to the constitutional outlook of the two parties is valid. A month later, while he was busy helping the Liberals, he described them as a party ". . . which desires to model the country, within reasonable limits, on English institutions, and which looks steadily towards English support without. . . . Created at Tirnovo, it has been studiously though cautiously nurtured during the months which have followed; and having obtained its first victory by causing the rejection of the Russianized programme of a Constitution, it now looks forward to a second by bringing about the downfall of a Russianizing ministry."<sup>51</sup> To the sceptical reader it might seem that Palgrave was being hoodwinked by the Liberal leaders and drafted to work for their cause in the hope that they would become a tool of British policy.

<sup>49</sup> See above, 111.

<sup>50</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 186, Sofia, October 6, 1879.

<sup>51</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 219, Sofia, November 7, 1879.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

If this were the case, it would not have been the first time that it had occurred in Bulgarian politics. But the evidence of other authorities supports the view held by Palgrave.

Radoslavov, for instance, who received a degree in law from Heidelberg in 1882 after studying in Austria, and who became a leading member of the Liberal party upon his return to Bulgaria, agrees with Palgrave's general view. He records in his memoirs that ". . . the Bulgarian Conservatives feared that the excessive liberty granted to the Bulgarian people would lead the country to misfortune instead of prosperity and progress, whereas the Liberals were convinced that progress would be the result of freedom. . . . And while the Conservatives advocated certain limitations on the organic law of the principality, the Liberals were fanatically attached to the Constitution of Tirnovo."<sup>52</sup>

It is strange that the terms "Liberal" and "Conservative" should have fitted the Bulgarian situation as accurately as they did, and yet they express fully the essential difference between the two points of view. Both parties admitted that Bulgaria was poor and inexperienced, but there the agreement ended. To the more prosperous citizens, and to many who had been educated under the shadow of the Austrian or the German systems, it was obvious that the more substantial people should be given the leadership in the new government either through an indirect system of voting or through a carefully selected upper house. That was the system used in some of the most prosperous and successful Western European states, and Bulgaria should not try to improve on it for the time being. On the other hand, there were many intellectuals who were distinguished more for their respect for knowledge than their worldly possessions,

<sup>52</sup> Vasil Radoslawoff, *Bulgarien und die Weltkrise* (Berlin, 1923), 3; a similar view is taken by the veteran leader of the Radical party, Todor G. Vlaiĳkov, in his *Sŭchineniya* [Works] (6 vols.; Sofia, 1925-31), V, 322-323.

and to them the only reasonable solution of the problem was to copy the most advanced constitutional models and thus save the country the trouble of going through the long political evolution by which countries such as France and Belgium, for example, had achieved a considerable degree of democracy. They therefore demanded universal suffrage, a limited monarchy and the other guarantees of a democratic form of government which they had succeeded in obtaining at Tirnovo.<sup>53</sup>

The constitutional ideas of the Liberals were ably presented by their biweekly organ the *Nezavisimost* (Independence), which was founded in 1880 as a continuation of Lyuben Karavelov's paper of the same name which had ceased publication in 1874. The editors of the new paper were conscious that they were in the tradition of the revolutionary leader, but the issues which they discussed would indeed have sounded strange to the ears of Lyuben Karavelov. In its opening issue the editors declared that their chief aim was to protect the constitution by attacking all those who criticized it or who wished to change it by restricting the liberties which it guaranteed.<sup>54</sup> A constitution it defined as a contract between the people and the governing authorities, setting forth the respective powers of the two contracting parties. A constitution is good only insofar as it permits the people to participate in the government of the country, and it is to the lasting credit of the party that at Tirnovo it fought for and obtained a liberal constitution. As regards the important relationship between the legislative and executive power which was soon to involve the Liberals in a long struggle, the *Nezavisimost* was quite clear. It saw one basic principle in the Tirnovo Constitu-

<sup>53</sup> D. Blagoev, *Prinos kŭm istoriyata na sotsializma v Bŭlgariya* [A contribution to the history of socialism in Bulgaria] (Sofia, 1906), 64-65.

<sup>54</sup> *Nezavisimost*, V, 1 (August 27/September 8, 1880), 1-4.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

tion: "The National Assembly makes the laws, the Prince proclaims them."<sup>55</sup>

In spite of the extreme devotion to popular sovereignty which the Liberals frequently displayed, one would be mistaken to assume that they were placing an undue reliance on the ability of the common man to run his own affairs. Writing from Germany in the winter of 1880 to the conservative *Maritsa* St. Danev, later destined to lead his country to defeat in the Balkan Wars, admitted that the change from the despotism of the Turkish rule had been too great and too sudden. Nevertheless, the only way the country could learn the art of self-government and insure itself against despotism in the future was to insist on a liberal constitution from the start. If the Bulgarian peasant was backward, he wrote, so was the French and Italian peasant. The civil liberties and the unicameral assembly were all in accord with the national sentiment, and the restraint which was necessary for their successful operation could be learned only by experience. A paternalistic regime would contribute nothing to the political education of the people.<sup>56</sup> A similar line was taken by Matinchev, writing from Yale University, in defense of the freedom of the press.<sup>57</sup>

In its most extreme form, the outlook of the Liberals was akin to that of the nihilists whose works many of them had read, although they maintained no actual connection with the revolutionary movement in Russia. While in Russia, nihilism ". . . was the expression of the doubts and intellectual uncertainties of the discontented intelligentsia,

<sup>55</sup> *Nezavisimost*, V, 8 (September 24/October 6, 1880), 1-2.

<sup>56</sup> St. Danev, "Polozhenieto v knyazhestvoto" [The situation in the principality], *Maritsa*, III, No. 156 (January 29/February 10, 1880), 5-7.

<sup>57</sup> Iv. N. Matinchev, "Gotovi li sme za svobodno pechat?" [Are we ready for a free press?], *Maritsa*, III, No. 178 (April 15/27, 1880), 6-7; III, No. 179 (April 18/30, 1880), 6-7.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

repressed by absolutism . . . ,”<sup>58</sup> the condition in Bulgaria before the liberation had provided an intellectual climate in which the individualist teachings of the nihilists flourished. The first effect of the liberation on the extremists was a desire for “. . . the absolute freedom of the individual, and the rejection of everything that might restrict his freedom.”<sup>59</sup> To a certain extent, this point of view had its influence on the deliberations at Tirnovo. And finally, there was the socialist element which was a prominent feature of Botïov’s writings and which came to Bulgaria in part from Russia and in part from Serbia where a number of Bulgarians picked up the socialist teachings of Marković and Pelagić.<sup>60</sup>

The point of view of the Conservatives with respect to the Tirnovo Constitution was made sufficiently clear in the debates of the Constitutional Assembly, where they placed more reliance on reason and argument than did their opponents, and it was soon to become even more obvious as their political program unfolded itself. Not long after the constitution had been set up, their party paper, the *Vitosh*, bewailed the fact that “. . . instead of devoting ourselves to the organization of our government, we spend our time tearing out each other’s hair . . . in the name of the people and the fatherland.”<sup>61</sup> During the first year after the parties had assumed a definite character, however, the situation was such that the Conservatives could not very well attack the constitution openly. It was one of the chief weaknesses of the Conservatives that they never succeeded in arousing any popular enthusiasm, and in cognizance of this fact their political program was one which called for an attempt to establish themselves in a strong position in the executive branch of the government, rather than an

<sup>58</sup> Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 82.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 83-84.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-86.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Yanko Sakázov, *Bългарite v svojata istoriya* [The Bulgarians in their history] (3rd ed., Sofia, 1922), 230.



## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

effort to win a majority in the legislature. It is clear, however, that they favored greatly extending the powers of the prince, restricting civil liberties, and introducing a bicameral system with indirect voting for the lower house and an appointed upper house.<sup>62</sup>

Closely connected with the views of the two parties was the economic revolution accompanying Bulgaria's liberation from Turkish rule, which completely altered the trend of agriculture, industry and the means of production itself. The agrarian system was fundamentally changed, with the abolition of all the feudal dues and privileges, the expropriation of the large landowners, and the creation of a large number of small property holders. This was accompanied by a redistribution of the population, and the country as a whole passed from a feudal landlord economy to a small-landowner village economy. Superficially, it was to the advantage of the peasants to be freed of the restrictions placed on them by the Turkish system of agriculture, but before long they were worse off than ever before. Competing for the first time in a free market, and handicapped by agricultural methods which had not improved since the days of Homer, many peasants soon found it necessary to borrow money and mortgage their property, frequently losing their land. A law was passed in 1880 in an attempt to protect them, but it was a number of years before the state banking system had developed sufficiently to safeguard the peasants against usury. In addition to these hardships, the first land taxes, with which the government attempted to replace the Turkish tithe, contributed their part in ruining the independent small landowners.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Yanko Sakázov, *op. cit.*, 230-231; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 63-64; Al. S. Stamboliški, *Politicheski partii ili súslóvni organizatsii?* [Political parties or professional organizations?] (2nd ed., Sofia, 1920), 166-167.

<sup>63</sup> Ivan Sakázov, *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929), 265-266; Zhak Natan, *Ikonomicheska istoriya na Búlgariya* [The economic history of Bulgaria] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1938), II, 24-42; Sakázov, *Búl-*

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

In the home industries, the liberation wreaked an even greater havoc than it did in agriculture. To a great extent excluded from the economic life of Western Europe, the Bulgarian artisans had geared their production to meet the demands of the Turkish markets. While some of the home industries, such as weaving, had begun to suffer from the introduction of modern methods before 1878, it was not until the liberation that the economic life of the towns collapsed. The effect of the liberation was twofold. It greatly reduced the market for the Bulgarian products, some of which depended almost entirely on the Ottoman system, and it also placed the town industries in competition with Western Europe. One result of the foreign competition was that it soon created a demand among the more prosperous elements of the population for consumers' goods which could only be imported. The total effect of these various factors was the economic death of the towns and villages in the Balkan Mountains. The wealthier artisans now became entrepreneurs and the less fortunate ones descended on the social scale to the position of common laborers. It was ten years, however, before capitalism began to function successfully in Bulgaria under government protection, and the intervening decade, characterized by a growing supply of both agricultural and industrial labor, is what is known to the Marxist historians as the preliminary accumulation of capital.<sup>64</sup>

To define precisely the relationship of this economic revolution to the political parties is not easy. To the Marxists, of course, there is an obvious identity between the new independent peasants and artisans of the early 1880's when their freedom was new and their economic ruin had not been achieved, and the doctrines of the Liberals who

*garite*, 219; Karl Kassner, *Bulgarien und die Türkei*, "Länder und Völker der Türkei, Heft 10" (Leipzig, 1918), 26.

<sup>64</sup> Sakázov, *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 266-267; Natan, *op. cit.*, II, 42-56; Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 57-61.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

preached the virtues of popular sovereignty. Such an interpretation would account not only for the political bias of their views but also for the overwhelming support which the Liberals received throughout this period. On the other hand, the class distinctions were so vague at this time and the arguments which the Liberals used in their campaigns were so largely based on the traditional grievances of the people against their oppressors, that one is forced to discount the economic effects of the liberation on the political parties at this particular time, although this interpretation becomes much more convincing a decade later when the capitalistic form of production had begun to take root.<sup>65</sup> An original interpretation, which may be mentioned as a curiosity, is that of Stamboliiski, the agrarian leader of the twentieth century who was also an amateur political theorist. It was his view that there were really two extremist parties. One was the Liberal Party, led by Tsankov and Karavelov and supported by the moderately prosperous artisans and businessmen, and the other a fictitious Democratic Party, led by Slaveïkov and Stambolov and representing the common man. This interpretation has no factual basis, however, but was developed as a necessary part of his theory of the breakdown of political parties and the substitution of professional organizations.<sup>66</sup>

In summary, the Conservative Party may be described as comprising a small group of able men who favored authority and discipline as principles of government. Having little popular support, they placed their hopes on the strengthening of the executive power as a means of restraining what they believed to be dangerous democratic forces. The Liberal Party, on the other hand, was far more of a national party. It received the support of the great majority

<sup>65</sup> The Marxist point of view is ably presented by Blagoev, *op. cit.*, 57-68. and Natan, *op. cit.*, II, 194-197.

<sup>66</sup> Stamboliiski, *Politicheski partii*, 166-167.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

of the people, and its popularity was due in part to the economic conditions which had for the time being created a large group of small, independent producers. To a far greater extent, however, the Liberals relied for their political strength on the traditional antipathy of the more enlightened of their followers to all forms of oppression and tyranny. The outward form which this point of view took was the desire to increase the constitutional prerogatives of the National Assembly at the expense of those of the prince.

### PARTY LEADERS AND PARTY PRESS

ONE complaint which is frequently made, especially by persons of Western European origin, is that there was a great dearth of able leaders in Bulgaria during the first several years after the liberation. A brief review of the prominent politicians reveals, however, that it was experience rather than ability that was lacking. One might go even further and say that had the Balkan states not been a center of interest of the European imperialist powers, the political leaders would have acquired sufficient experience at an early date and without the great strain on the country which the first decades of Bulgarian history were destined to bring.

While the Conservative Party was far weaker in popular support than its opponents, its leadership was in very capable hands. If the prominent Conservatives can be said to have had certain characteristics in common, these were a distrust of popular movements, reliance on authority and discipline as political principles, and a deep respect for the forms of government of such countries as Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, where most of them had received their higher education. During the debates of the Constitutional Assembly, Todor Ikononov was probably the most prominent leader of the moderates and the one chosen

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

by them to present their views on the desirability of a Senate. Born in a village near the mountain town of Kotel in 1838, he studied for four years at the Kiev Theological Academy. Returning to Bulgaria in 1865, he taught for six years in Shumen and in Tulcha, and then went to Constantinople where he became prominent in church affairs. As vice-president of the Constitutional Assembly, and later as member of two cabinets, he gave evidence not only of considerable ability but also of great honesty and patriotism. But he preferred the sober deliberation of responsible and honest citizens to the stormy popular assemblies where carefully prepared arguments and sound reasoning had little influence. The inflexibility of his personality was another handicap in his political career, and he never remained long in a position without becoming the center of some insoluble conflict of personalities which inevitably ended in his resignation.<sup>67</sup>

Similar to Ikonomov in many respects was Todor Stoyanov Burmov, Bulgaria's first minister-president. A few years older than Ikonomov, he graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy four years before the latter entered it, and returned to Bulgaria as a schoolteacher. He was soon drawn to Constantinople by the church struggle, however, and it was there that he made his chief contribution to the Bulgarian cause. He was for many years a leading advocate of coöperation with Russia, but after several years of Russian administration in Bulgaria he left the Conservative Party and supported the Liberals as the only means of restraining Russian influence. In spite of the important positions which he held after the liberation, Burmov did

<sup>67</sup> Ivan Todorov, *Todor Ikonomov i deñnostta mu v sluzhene na búlgarskiya narod* [Todor Ikonomov and his activity in the service of the Bulgarian nation] (Sofia, 1921), *passim*; K. Ikonomov, ed., *Súchineniyata na Todor Ikonomov* [The works of Todor Ikonomov] (4 vols.; Shumen, 1897), IV, 103-114.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

not exercise any great influence and was regarded chiefly as an honest and patriotic administrator.<sup>68</sup>

The real leadership of the Conservative Party was provided by the so-called "triumvirate" of Stoilov, Nachevich and Grekov. Of the three, Stoilov was destined to have the most influence over Prince Alexander and to play the leading role in Bulgarian affairs until the turn of the century. He was born in Philippopolis in 1853, graduated from Robert College, Constantinople, in 1871 and later received a degree in law from Heidelberg. His acquaintance with the German language and with German modes of thought immediately won him the friendship and confidence of Prince Alexander, who appointed him as his secretary. The fragments of his diary which have been published reveal him as a firm opponent of the Constitution of Tirnovo, which he considered quite unsuitable for Bulgarian conditions.<sup>69</sup>

Dimitŭr Panaŭtov Grekov, the second member of the "triumvirate," was the descendant of a Greek who had moved to Bessarabia. Educated in Aix and in Paris, he had practiced law in Braila until the liberation, when he was employed by the Russian provisional government. Although he was a faithful member of the party and served on several cabinets, Grekov never achieved either the influence or the prestige of his two colleagues. The fact that he was of Greek parentage made him a constant target for

<sup>68</sup> Yu. Ivanov, *Bŭlgarskii periodicheski pechat ot vŭzrazhdaniето mu do dnes (ot 1844-1890 god.)* [The Bulgarian periodical press from its renaissance until today (1844-90)] (Sofia, 1893), 26.

<sup>69</sup> Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1939), 130, n. 1, 138-139, 165; K. Stoilov, "Dnevnitsi. Politicheskata kriza v 1879 godina" [Diary. The political crisis in 1879], *Bŭlgarska misŭl*, I (1925), 15; *Catalogue of the officers, graduates and students of Robert College, Constantinople, 1878-79* (Constantinople, 1879); Ivan Peev Plachkov, *Dr. K. Stoilov: zhivot i obshchestvena deŭnost* [Dr. K. Stoilov: his life and his public career] (Sofia, 1932), 3-13.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

the more nationalist-minded Liberals.<sup>70</sup> The most active of the three in the political sphere was Grigor Dimitrov Nachevich, son of a wealthy merchant family of Svishtov, who received his education in Constantinople, Vienna and Paris. He was thirty-three years of age at the time of the liberation, and had taken part in an uprising in 1867. By 1878, however, such revolutionary tendencies as he may have harbored in his youth were quiescent and his role in the Conservative Party was that of an active leader in the assembly and a specialist in financial questions on the cabinet.<sup>71</sup>

Aside from these outstanding Conservative leaders, there were a number of others who were prominent in demanding the reduction of the powers of the assembly. Konstantin Pomyanov, for instance, was the chairman of the committee of fifteen which had presented a report recommending "moderate conservatism" at the Constitutional Assembly. Born in 1850, he had studied in Tabor and Prague for a number of years, and had received a law degree in Vienna in 1878.<sup>72</sup> Another active adviser of the Conservatives was Constantin Jireček, the young Czech scholar who had made a name for himself by publishing a *History of the Bulgarian people* in 1876. Jireček, whose father had held office briefly in Austria-Hungary in 1871 as minister of education, was called to Bulgaria in 1879 and remained for five years as official adviser to the minister of public instruction. His background and his tastes brought him into close and friendly contact with Prince Alexander and Stoilov, and he played an active role in supporting the prince's efforts to increase his personal power.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 99-100.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 101-102; Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 200-201.

<sup>72</sup> Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 325-326.

<sup>73</sup> Konstantin Ireček, *Bългарski dnevnik, 30 oktomburii 1879-26 oktomburii 1884 g.* [Bulgarian diary, October 30, 1879—October 26, 1884] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1930-32), I, v-xxix; Vatroslav Jagič, "Josef Konstantin Jireček," *Neue österreichische Biographie, 1815-1918* (9 vols.; Vienna, 1923-35), I, 103-108.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

It is less easy to define the position of Marko D. Balabanov, who had spent many years as a leader of the Bulgarian community in Constantinople, after studying law in Paris. His sympathies before the liberation had certainly been with the moderates and he had borne the brunt of Lyuben Karavelov's impatient criticism of the churchmen in Constantinople. As secretary of the Holy Synod, he coöperated with Burmov in the church struggle and in 1876 he toured the European capitals with Tsankov in the hopes of arousing interest in the Bulgarian cause. After the liberation, however, when adherence to the principles of authority and moderation meant coöperating with the Russians against the popular sentiment, his patriotism overcame his conservatism and he joined Burmov in leaving the Conservative Party.<sup>74</sup>

Of the newspapers which supported the conservative point of view, the most influential was probably the *Maritsa* which was published in Eastern Rumelia. Founded in 1878, it was edited for several months by Nachevich and was then taken over by a group whose general outlook was similar to that of the Conservatives in Bulgaria. The *Maritsa* continued to support the Conservatives until the Union in 1885, when it ceased publication.<sup>75</sup> A more direct organ of the Conservative Party was the *Vitosha*, which was founded in June 1879, and which continued publication for about one year. Nachevich, Burmov and Balabanov were its editors, and its chief assignment was to support the first Conservative cabinets. Its attitude was that Bulgaria's great task was that of creating a new set of laws and institutions, and that until the country was firmly on its feet it could not afford to spend time on political controversies.<sup>76</sup> More important was the *Bŭlgarski glas* (Voice of Bulgaria), edited by Grekov, Stoilov and Ikonov, which was founded in 1880 and continued for four years

<sup>74</sup> Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 134.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 199-200.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 209-212.



## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

as the leading exponent of the doctrine of moderation. Its program was a simple one, stressing the two virtues of loyalty to the throne and the welfare of the fatherland.<sup>77</sup>

In contrast to the Conservatives, the Liberal leaders were distinguished more for their contacts with the sentiments of the people than for the warmth of their reception at Prince Alexander's court. Slaveïkov, Karavelov and Tsankov, the energetic Liberal team, have already been described in connection with their activity at the Constitutional Assembly. Suffice it to add that Slaveïkov ceased to play a leading role in politics after the signing of the constitution, although he served as a cabinet member on two occasions and was active in journalistic work. Of the younger leaders of the party, Stefan Nikolov Stambolov was certainly the most prominent. Still in his early twenties, Stambolov was active both as a journalist and as a floor leader in the National Assembly. His abilities had been recognized early in his life and in his home town of Tirnovo Dr. Albert Long, the American missionary, had suggested him as a possible candidate for Robert College. A scholarship for Odessa proved more enticing, however, and what little formal education Stambolov received was stamped with the memories of the oppression of the Russian government and the secret activities of the revolutionary societies. As a political leader, Stambolov was very popular with the ordinary members of the National Assembly, and during the first years he was willing enough to follow the leadership of Karavelov and Tsankov.<sup>78</sup>

Nikola Suknarov was another prominent young Liberal. Born in the Danube town of Svishtov in 1848, he received a law degree at Zagreb in 1875 and served in various judi-

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 248-249.

<sup>78</sup> George Washburn, *Fifty years in Constantinople and recollections of Robert College* (Boston and New York, 1909), 52; A. Hulme Beaman, *M. Stambuloff* (London, 1895), 17-41.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

cial capacities under the Russian provisional government. For several years he was one of Karavelov's ablest aides, but they finally split over questions of policy.<sup>79</sup> Similar to Suknarov in his general background was Svetoslav Milarov, who was educated in his native Constantinople and in Zagreb. His chief contribution to the Liberal cause was through his journalistic activity.<sup>80</sup>

A third group of prominent Liberals was formed by three somewhat younger men who had had the advantages of an education broader than that of their colleagues. Ivan Petkov Slaveïkov, son of the popular poet, was sent to Robert College while his father was living in Constantinople, and graduated in 1871. He later taught both in Bulgaria and at Robert College, and after the liberation served as governor of the province of Tirnovo and secretary of the Council of Ministers.<sup>81</sup> More prominent in later years as minister-president during the World War, Vasil Radoslavov received a degree in law from Heidelberg in 1882 and returned to Bulgaria to play a prominent role in the Liberal Party as an official in the judicial system and as minister of justice.<sup>82</sup> And, finally, there was young Stoyan Danev, only twenty years of age at the time of the liberation, who arrived fresh from Western Europe with a law degree in 1883 and joined his forces to those of the Liberals.<sup>83</sup>

Owing to their position during the first years of the constitutional regime, journalistic activity played a far greater part in the program of the Liberal Party than it did in that of the Conservatives. The Liberals relied on popular support for their strength—support on the part of the school-teachers, the civil servants and the new middle class which was beginning to grow up. To obtain and keep his support, it was necessary for them both to present their own ideas

<sup>79</sup> Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 258-259.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 375-376.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 260-261.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 339-340.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

and to attack those of the Conservatives. Most of the papers were short-lived, and their titles generally reveal the circumstances under which they were published and the great issues of the day. Thus, one of the first Liberal papers to be published in 1879 was the *Tsëlokupna Bŭlgariya* (Integral Bulgaria), edited by Petko Slaveïkov and his son Ivan. With a circulation of around six or seven hundred, it was published first in Tirnovo and then in Sofia in some seventy-eight issues. In addition to its regular fare, it carried articles in French which the Austrian consul-general found that he could influence by means of funds which had been placed at his disposal. It should be added, however, that after a careful survey he advised against the regular subsidy of any of the newspapers as the expense would be greater than the benefits gained.<sup>84</sup>

While some of the Liberal papers, such as the *Bŭlgarski lev* (Bulgarian lion) and the *Narodnost* (Nationality), died an early death others, such as the two series of the *Nezavisimost* (Independent), were quite important. The first *Nezavisimost*, founded in August 1880 as a continuation of Karavelov's revolutionary paper, was published by Suknarov and Milarov when the Liberal Party was in power and continued for over a year. The second *Nezavisimost*, on the other hand, was published in Philippopolis at a time when the Liberals were forced to seek refuge in Eastern Rumelia from the policy of the prince. Founded in October 1881, it continued for one year under the editorship of Karavelov and the two Slaveïkovs, and it served as the tribune for their struggle against the prince's regime in Bulgaria.<sup>85</sup> In the meantime, Stambolov conducted a press campaign all his own from his political headquarters in Tirnovo. His *Sŭedinenie* (Union) appeared in 1880 in ten weekly issues

<sup>84</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 21, Sofia, May 18, 1880; Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 241-244.

<sup>85</sup> Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 206-207, 252-258, 290-293.

### *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

and its program is well described by its title. The same may be said for his *Svoboden pečat* (Free press), which appeared for thirteen weeks in 1881. At this period, Stambolov was ardent both in his nationalism and in his liberalism, and the program of his *Svoboden pečat* included a demand for the union of all Bulgarian lands and for the defense of the Tirnovo Constitution. When, later in his career, he was forced to make a choice between these two planks of his platform, he supported nationalism without hesitation.<sup>86</sup>

Three more items conclude the roster of Liberal papers during this period. The *Sūznanie* (Conscience) was published for twelve months in 1883-1884 by young Radoslavov, and the *Sredets* (Sofia) appeared for a year and a half in 1884-1885 under the editorship of Danev. Neither of them exercised any wide influence, and their general outlook was narrowly partisan in character.<sup>87</sup> The great Liberal paper of the later constitutional period was the *Tŭrnovska Konstitutsiya* (Tirnovo Constitution), which was founded in January 1884, and which continued for some three and one-half years. Its editors and contributors included all of the left wing of the Liberal leaders and, as its title indicates, it was their organ at a time when their long struggle for popular sovereignty seemed for the moment to have ended in victory.<sup>88</sup>

During these first years after the liberation, there were no non-partisan daily newspapers. The first daily paper, the *Sĕkidnevniĭ novinar* (Daily news), was founded in Bucharest in 1877. It ceased publication during the Russian-Turkish war, however, and during the following years the party papers, which were chiefly biweeklies, had a monopoly of the market. Whereas the *Sĕkidnevniĭ novinar* had

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 273, 304.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 339-341, 375-380.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 380-381.

## *The Constitution and the Political Parties*

subscribed to the European news services and had published telegrams in French, the party press was concerned chiefly with the political issues of the day. It was not until 1890 that a modern daily newspaper made its appearance.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> B. M. Andreev, *Bŭlgarskiyat pečat prez vŭzrazhdaneto (zachenki i razvoŭ)* [The Bulgarian press during the renaissance (origins and development)] (Sofia, 1932), 145-148; Georgi Nikolov, *Istoriya na bŭlgarskiya vsŕkidneven pečat, 1877-1932 (Prinos)* [The history of the Bulgarian daily press, 1877-1932 (A contribution)] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1932), I, 9-16.

## CHAPTER VI. THE PRINCE AND THE EUROPEAN POWERS

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### PRINCE ALEXANDER OF BATTENBERG AND HIS CONSTITUTIONAL VIEWS

ON April 17/29, 1879, the day after the Constitutional Assembly accepted the constitution in its final form, the first Grand National Assembly met at Tirnovo for the purpose of electing the prince. This assembly, created under Articles 85 and 144 of the constitution, met in fulfillment of Article 3 of the Treaty of Berlin which provided that the prince of Bulgaria should be freely elected, and confirmed by the Sublime Porte with the agreement of the powers. A further restriction of the treaty specified that no member of a reigning European dynasty should be eligible.<sup>1</sup> The assembly met for one day only, as the task of electing a prince was a simple one. After Bishop Kliment of Tirnovo, the president of the assembly, had read a list of the possible candidates and explained the reasons for the special aptitude of Alexander of Battenberg for the position, Slaveïkov rose to say a few words in the Hessian prince's favor. No sooner did Slaveïkov pronounce the word Battenberg, however, than the assembly broke into cheers and he was elected by acclamation.<sup>2</sup>

The duties of the Prince of Bulgaria were never clearly defined, even in the constitution, and the qualifications of the various candidates whose names had been considered were judged chiefly from two points of view: their acceptability to the Bulgarian people and their acceptability to the

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Noradounghian, *Receuil d'actes internationaux de l'empire ottoman* (4 vols.; Paris, 1897-1903), IV, 177-178.

<sup>2</sup> *Almanah na bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya (po sluchaï sŭzdavane tretoto bŭlgarsko tsarstvo)* [Almanac of the Bulgarian constitution (on the occasion of the founding of the third Bulgarian kingdom)] (Plovdiv, 1911), 369-373.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

powers. The first criterion eliminated such candidates as Božo Petrović of Montenegro and Prince Bibesco, while the second disposed of Carol of Rumania, Ignatiev and Dondukov. Of the remaining candidates, Henry XVII of Reuss, Waldemar of Denmark and Alexander of Battenberg, the last-named had a number of qualifications which made him the first choice not only of Russia and the powers, but also of the assembly which elected him.<sup>3</sup>

Battenberg was acceptable to the powers, as his leading biographer states, because of his unique personal ties: "A favorite nephew of the Tsar, related to the English ruling house, a German prince, the son of an Austrian general, closely connected with Russia by virtue of his participation in the campaign of 1877-78 and yet not a Russian, his choice gave the impression of a concession to Beaconsfield, a compliment to Bismarck and a favor to Austria, and at the same time it seemed to place a willing tool in the hands of Russia.

"Prince Alexander was thus a European compromise, and his ultimate fate was the fate of all compromises: pulled first in one direction and then in another by the most contradictory of conflicting interests, and finally falling in spite of his personality gifted with intelligence, desire for work and courage."<sup>4</sup>

The fact that he had participated in the Russian-Turkish campaign was a sufficient recommendation for the Grand Assembly, which made no attempt to exercise its own judgment on the choice of the prince. But while Battenberg was well suited to satisfy the conflicting suspicions of the powers, no attempt was made to discover whether he had the necessary qualities for the difficult position for which

<sup>3</sup> Simeon Radev, *Stroitelitě na sūvrēmenna Būlgariya* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1911), I, 134-141; E. C. Corti, *Alexander von Battenberg. Sein Kampf mit den Zaren und Bismarck* (Vienna, 1920), 55-56.

<sup>4</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 57; A. G. Drandar, *Cinq ans de règne. Le prince Alexandre de Battenberg en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1884), 14.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

he had been chosen. Would he be able to prevent Austria-Hungary and Russia from making his person and his country the center of their Balkan rivalry? Would he be able to cope with the political situation within the country, especially with regard to his position as defined by the constitution? Had the Grand National Assembly decided to investigate these questions, its members might well have been less eager to elect him.

Born in 1857, Alexander of Battenberg was the third child of Prince Alexander of Hesse, whose sister, Marie, had married the future Emperor Alexander II in 1841. The connection with the Russian imperial family remained a close one, and when he completed his formal education at Darmstadt, Schepfenthal and the *Königliche sächsische Kadettenschule* at Dresden, the young Alexander was made a lieutenant both in a regiment of Hessian Dragoons and in a regiment of Russian Uhlans.<sup>5</sup>

Thus it was that when the Russian campaign against Turkey was launched, the eager young nobleman found no trouble in having himself transferred to the Russian army, where he had an opportunity to put into practice his careful training in the art of war, and in June 1877 he was appointed to Alexander II's suite. It was under these circumstances that he made his first entrance into his future principality, participating both in the capture of Tirnovo and in the siege of Pleven. The impressions he received during the Turkish campaign of his Russian colleagues and of his future subjects were not of the best. The Russian army he found lax and inefficient, and the Bulgarians were not the poor, oppressed people he expected to find. "All the villages," he reported, "are inhabited by Turks and Bulgars. As soon as news of our approach comes, the Bulgars

<sup>5</sup> Hans Klaeber, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien. Ein Lebensbild* (Dresden, 1904), 2-5; Egon Corti, *The downfall of three dynasties* (London, 1934), 94; Corti, *Battenberg*, 57-58.



## *The Prince and the European Powers*

hurl themselves upon the Turks, murder them, plunder and burn everything.”<sup>6</sup> And in July he wrote from Tirnovo that “The country is simply magnificent, but the Bulgars are just as fiendish as the Turks.”<sup>7</sup>

By the time he had celebrated his twenty-first birthday, a few weeks after the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano, Battenberg's outlook on life had been molded by his environment. He incorporated in his person both the virtues and the weaknesses of the aristocratic military training which he had received. He was honest and honorable, eager to please his superiors and considerate of his inferiors. He also had a pleasing personality, made friends easily, and was popular with his colleagues. At the same time, however, his knowledge of politics was slight and he was unable to coöperate with people whom he did not consider his equals. He paid great attention to military and court formalities, and it often seemed to the outsider that he was more interested in the forms than in the functions of the military and civil institutions. In spite of his youth and inexperience, he was ambitious to make Bulgaria into a strong military and aristocratic state on the model of the only ones with which he was intimately familiar. Yet he lacked the qualities which would have permitted him to steer a safe course between the rival imperial policies and at the same time make use of the traditions of Bulgarian politics in such a way as to weld the country into a unified and orderly state. As the German ambassador to Russia, Von Schweinitz, said after having observed Battenberg in action for several years, “. . . the Prince has many excellent qualities, a pleasing and impressive personality, courage and youthful zeal, but he is lacking in the gifts of statesmanship. . . .”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 231.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 232, 229-243.

<sup>8</sup> *Denkwürdigkeiten des Botschafters General v. Schweinitz* (2 vols.; Berlin, 1927), II, 235-236; most of the writers on this period have something to say about Battenberg's character and personality, but the following may

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

But if Battenberg himself was poorly prepared for his new position, his royal sponsors harbored no illusions as to the difficulties which awaited him. Speaking of his candidacy, Alexander II said that ". . . in his own and his father's interests I certainly do not covet it for him." And Empress Marie reflected the same sentiment when she admitted that ". . . I feel the same. I should be wretched to think of one of my own sons being in so difficult a position. . . ."9 By the members of the family, his candidacy was regarded almost in the light of a misfortune. Writing in condolence to the young man's father, Duke Adolphus of Nassau agreed that "The young man will be in a position which, even if tenable, will be beset with immense difficulties."<sup>10</sup>

Why was it, then, that a promising young man of so prominent a family should have been willing to undertake such a difficult job? The answer is that the members of the family of Hesse were in a precarious financial position and, alienated from their Prussian rulers since the war of 1866, were forced to seek their fortunes in the service of foreign governments. This fact was emphasized by Shuvalov early in 1879, when he sounded out Salisbury as to the British point of view. "Prince Battenberg," he argued, ". . . had the advantage of being a *persona grata* not only in Russia and Austria, but also . . . in London, on account of the position of his brother in the English navy: and as

be cited as representative: Corti, *Battenberg*, 57-58; Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1929), 159-160; P. A. Matvëev, *Bolgariya posle Berlinskago Kongressa. Istoricheskiï ocherk* [Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin. A historical sketch] (St. Petersburg, 1887), 70-71; P. D. Parensov, "V Bolgarii (Vospominaniya ofitsera general'nago shtaba)" [In Bulgaria (The recollections of an officer of the general staff)], *Russkaya starina*, CXXXV (1906), 279-281.

<sup>9</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 251.

<sup>10</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 256; a similar view is expressed by Robert Windham Graves, *Storm centres of the Near East: personal memories, 1879-1929* (London, 1933), 34.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

he was poor, and nothing but a lieutenant, he might look upon the Principality of Bulgaria as a promotion, and would probably accept it."<sup>11</sup>

Whether or not the Russians realized its importance at the time, Battenberg's financial dependence was soon to be one of their strongest holds over him. At the time he went to Bulgaria, the young prince was confident that he would be an independent sovereign, and his father took special pains to assure Queen Victoria that he was no ally of Russia. "He sets a great value on your being informed," Alexander of Hesse wrote, "that he is *not Russian* in heart, and that he is *not inclined* to act as Russia's tool [marionnette]."<sup>12</sup>

These were certainly his true intentions at the time he left for Bulgaria, but in less than a year the Austrian representative at Sofia observed that the prince's position of dependence was a very important factor of his official conduct. "The force of resistance of the young prince is broken. Bound by the innumerable kindnesses rendered him by Emperor Alexander, very dependent from the material point of view, lacking honest advisers, Prince Alexander in spite of his best intentions had sooner or later to become the desired instrument of Panslavism."<sup>13</sup> While events were soon to show that his view was hasty and unduly pessimistic, the Austrian representative was undoubtedly right in pointing out that the prince's financial dependence on the Russian imperial family was one of the important factors in his position.

Starting out his career not only without experience in politics and statecraft, but also without the independence of action which might have permitted him to cope with

<sup>11</sup> *The Letters of Queen Victoria. Second series*, George Earle Buckle, ed. (3 vols.; London, 1926-28), III, 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, III, 16.

<sup>13</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 6, Sofia, February 4, 1880; see also Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., No. 19, Sofia, May 1, 1880.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the new problems as they arose, Battenberg was confronted by the constitutional framework created for him at Tirnovo during the month preceding his election.<sup>14</sup> It is, therefore, of first importance to discover his own approach to his constitutional powers and his personal opinion of the form of government which had been adopted without his knowledge or consent. From the very first, Battenberg felt that the Constitution of Tirnovo was "ridiculously liberal," so much so, in fact, that he could only explain it as a deliberate attempt on the part of Russia to place him in an embarrassing position.<sup>15</sup> But whoever was responsible for the document, it was clear that it did not suit the prince. Shortly after his election, his father wrote that "The poor boy will have to sacrifice his youth to the arduous task. He seems determined to make the attempt. He will unfortunately be faced with a constitution that is more democratic than any other in the monarchist world. It is an incredibly clumsy piece of work, very democratic in tendency, and full of gaps. In three weeks' time poor Sandro [Alexander] is to take his oath to this constitution, which will make it impossible for him to rule."<sup>16</sup>

The charges that Prince Dondukov-Korsakov deliberately made the constitution liberal upon learning that Battenberg would probably be the emperor's choice, are contrary to the facts of the case. After reading the minutes of the Constitutional Assembly, one cannot doubt but that the liberal revisions made in the Russian draft of the Organic Statute were directly the result of the sentiments of

<sup>14</sup> See above, 101-110.

<sup>15</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 63; A. F. Golowine, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien (1879-1886)* (Vienna, 1896), 19-20; Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 179, Sofia, September 27, 1879; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3308, No. 11, Sofia, February 10, 1881; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 3, Sofia, January 21, 1880; No. 16, Sofia, April 7, 1880; these are a few examples of Battenberg's repeated complaints against the constitution.

<sup>16</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three empires*, 256.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

the extremists. Dondukov might, had he so desired, have directed Lukiyarov to combat persistently all attempts to revise the Organic Statute, but such an action would certainly have met with the firm opposition of the representatives of the powers. The liberal bias of the constitution was the direct result of the free debates in the Constitutional Assembly, and the circumstances which led Russia to permit the free discussions cannot be said to have been due to Battenberg's candidacy.<sup>17</sup>

Battenberg's concern with regard to the constitution made itself immediately evident. When he went to Livadia in May 1879, shortly after his election, he discussed with the emperor a number of the problems raised by his new position, and one of the chief of these was that of the constitution. He in fact went so far as to make the alteration of the constitution a condition for his acceptance of the crown. To this the emperor raised many objections but, at the insistence of Battenberg and doubtless in ignorance of the precise nature of things in Bulgaria, he telegraphed Dondukov instructing that a clause be added to the constitution permitting the prince to amend any part of it on his own initiative. When Dondukov's reply was received that "The order of Your Majesty has been carried out," Battenberg felt that his task would be much lighter.<sup>18</sup>

He was greatly dismayed, therefore, when he arrived in Sofia and discovered that no change had been made in the constitution, and that the conditions for its alteration were such as to require the approval of two-thirds of the National

<sup>17</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 58-60, and Adolf Koch, *Fürst Alexander von Bulgarien* (Darmstadt, 1887), 16-17, are only two of the pro-Battenberg writers who insist that the constitution was a Russian plot; for a discussion of Russia's policy, see below, 142-148; the same erroneous assumption is made by Elinor F. B. Grogan, "Bulgaria under Prince Alexander," *The Slavonic Review*, I (1922-23), 561-562, and James D. Bourchier, "Prince Alexander of Bulgaria," *Fortnightly Review*, LXI (1894), 105, the latter of whom did not begin his active service as a Balkan correspondent until 1888.

<sup>18</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 63-64.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Assembly before a constitutional amendment could even be considered.<sup>19</sup> It is not possible to ascertain the responsibilities for this misunderstanding, nor is it possible to know what position Battenberg would have taken had he realized from the outset that the chances of a constitutional revision were very slim. It is important to realize, however, that Prince Alexander arrived in Bulgaria with the profound conviction that the constitution was entirely unsatisfactory, and that he harbored a feeling of resentment against Russia because of the misunderstanding with regard to his powers of constitutional amendment.

### RUSSIA'S POLICIES IN BULGARIA

HAD the Russians followed a straightforward and consistent policy in Bulgaria after the Treaty of Berlin, they might well have succeeded in regaining much of their lost prestige. They might even have created a large Bulgaria which would have been a reliable ally in case of the reopening of the Eastern Question which was expected at any time. This did not occur, however, and one of the main reasons was that the different branches of the Russian government pursued conflicting policies in Bulgaria. When Battenberg visited St. Petersburg early in 1880, one of his chief complaints expressed to the German ambassador was against the conduct of the Russian officials. The Russian consul received his instructions from Giers, while the minister of war, who was a Russian, received his orders from Milyutin, and the Russian civil officials were ardent followers of Aksakov's panslav doctrines which conflicted with the official policy.<sup>20</sup> Under these circumstances, it is not strange

<sup>19</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 66-67; J. Ashburnham, the new British representative, heard this same story indirectly by way of his Austrian colleague, Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 228, Sofia, December 2, 1879.

<sup>20</sup> *Schweinitz*, II, 101-102; see also S. S. Tatishchev, "Rossiya i Bolgariya. Istoricheskaya spravka" [Russia and Bulgaria. A historical inquiry], *Iz proshlago Russkoj diplomatii* (St. Petersburg, 1890), 364-365.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

that the prince and the political parties found it difficult to work in harmony.

Aside from the personal plans and initiatives of various Russian officials, there were two main lines of Russian policy which operated in Bulgaria simultaneously. The first was that of Giers, the foreign minister, and was characterized by a spirit of compromise with the powers in an attempt to tide over Russia's period of weakness following the war with Turkey and to prevent any serious trouble in the Balkans until Russia was again ready to take a more active role. The second was that of Milyutin, the minister of war, who was more aggressive in his attitude without, however, subscribing to the extreme panslav demands. For the first year after the Treaty of Berlin these two policies coincided to a large extent, as even the most moderate of the Russian officials felt humiliated by the treaty and supported a policy of resisting its application wherever possible, and for the time being the panslavs themselves were able to do no more than that. But in the long run, the two points of view were bound to come into conflict.<sup>21</sup>

One of the chief reasons both for the undue optimism of the Russians with regard to their prestige in Bulgaria, and for the great fear of Austria-Hungary and England that Russia would have no trouble in using a large Bulgaria for her own purposes, was their ignorance of the social and economic conditions in the new country. Indoctrinated with the panslav ideas on the unity of the Slavic race, the Russians expected to find a *tabula rasa* on which they

<sup>21</sup> W. N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and after, a diplomatic history of the Near Eastern settlement, 1878-1880* (London, 1938), 145; Alfred Fischel, *Der Panslavismus bis zum Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1919), 429-430; the reflections of these two points of view in the Russian press are ably discussed by Irene Grüning, *Die russische öffentliche Meinung und ihre Stellung zu den Grossmächten, 1878-1894* (Berlin, 1929), 54-62; Sergēi Zhigarev, *Russkaya politika v vostochnom voprosē* [Russian policy in the Eastern Question] (2 vols.; Moscow, 1896), II, 220-221, gives a very superficial interpretation of Russian policy.



## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

would be free to inscribe any policy they saw fit. It was natural that the British and Austrian governments should have adopted this attitude, but the experience of Russia in Serbia, Greece and Rumania should have taught her not to place too great reliance on newly liberated Balkan states. Yet once again the amorphousness of the new state was taken for granted, and both Russia and her Western rivals embarked on policies which were based largely on false premises insofar as Bulgaria was concerned.<sup>22</sup>

The appearance in Bulgaria of a liberal constitution, which in many respects seemed like a deliberate satire on Russian institutions, was the result of the temporary co-operation of both the moderate and the aggressive elements in Russian policy. In the view of one writer, the liberal bias of Alexander II in the last years of his reign would alone have been sufficient to account for the political complexion of the Constitution of Tirnovo.<sup>23</sup> But even in the hour of defeat, the Russians in Bulgaria were motivated by a positive policy. The romantic ideas of the panslavs were being discarded, the emperor and his foreign minister were hesitating between resistance to both England and Austria and a compromise with the latter, and the new force of Russian nationalism which was to dominate the reign of Alexander III had not yet taken form.

But in the meantime Milyutin, the minister of war, saw that certain basic Russian interests in Bulgaria had to be maintained and that this could be done only with the aid of those groups which seemed most favorable to Russia. It was under Milyutin's leadership, therefore, that Prince Dondukov-Korsakov and later P. D. Parensov gave their support to the nationalist forces in Bulgaria which were

<sup>22</sup> E. Grimm, "K istorii rusko-bolgarskih otnoshenii" [On the history of Russian-Bulgarian relations], *Novyi vostok*, V (1924), 70-75.

<sup>23</sup> S. Skazkin, *Konets avstro-rusko-germanskogo soyuza* [The end of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance] (Vol. I; Moscow, 1928), I, 212-213.



### *The Prince and the European Powers*

soon to be organized as the Liberal Party. It was Milyutin's view, and it was undoubtedly based on the reports of Dondukov, that in order to be assured of a permanent ally in Bulgaria the powers of the new prince must be restricted as far as possible. His great fear was that the Near Eastern Question would be reopened some time in the near future and find Russia unprepared to claim her share of the spoils. Russia's safest course, then, was to grant the nationalist forces the liberal constitution which they desired on condition that they permit Russia to organize the army and to construct a strategic railway from the Danube to Sofia. Milyutin could certainly not expect Bulgaria to support her army as a permanent tool of Russian policy, but the desire for the union of the two Bulgarias presented an immediate objective which served to insure Bulgarian coöperation for the time being. In this way, the more aggressive forces in Russia planned to prepare the way for a renewal of their influence in the Eastern Question.<sup>24</sup>

While Milyutin's plan of action fell far short of the panslav dream of Bulgaria as a Russian province and Constantinople as a Russian port, it nevertheless received the support of the panslavs as a temporary compromise. This support was readily accepted by the extremists in Bulgaria, and they coöperated willingly with General P. D. Parensov, a spiritual heir of Ignatiev and Dondukov who was appointed as Bulgarian minister of war and whose chief duty was the organization of the new army. He and his assistant, Colonel A. A. Shepelev, greatly resented the election of Battenberg to the Bulgarian throne. They at once noted the approval with which England and Austria greeted his candidacy, and that alone was sufficient in their eyes to make him suspect. Their suspicions were confirmed when he brought with

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 213-219; B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880* (Oxford, 1937), 567, 571; Gerhard von Schulze-Gävernitz, *Volkswirtschaftliche Studien aus Russland* (Leipzig, 1899), 175-176, 228-229.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

him a number of Germans as members of his personal suite, and chose as his Bulgarian advisers the moderates who had opposed both the outburst of nationalism and the extensive powers granted to the National Assembly at Tirnovo. It was under these circumstances, then, that the Tirnovo Constitution embarked on its honeymoon. Within Bulgaria, it was supported by the bulk of the population under the leadership of the nationalists whose reliance on the will of the people took the political form of a liberal constitution. From without, it was backed by an aggressive Russian policy which saw in an alliance with the Bulgarian nationalists its best opportunity for a permanent and successful claim to the spoils of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>25</sup>

Had the Russian support of the Liberals been unanimous, and had the international situation permitted a number of years of peaceful progress, the truly liberal elements in Bulgarian political life might well have found it possible to lay the basis for a sound and workable governmental structure within the framework of the Tirnovo Constitution. But Giers, the acting Russian foreign minister, was not willing to lend his support to a policy in Bulgaria which would have provoked the united resistance of Austria and England. It was his view that Russian foreign policy should pursue the limited objective of securing a stable position in Europe in order to permit the development of her Asiatic territories. In order to end her isolation in Europe and remove the cause for the close coöperation between Austria and England which was a continual threat to Russian interests, Giers embarked on a policy of regaining the confidence of Austria in the spring of 1879. The concessions which he was willing to make in order to attain this end included the

<sup>25</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CI (1900), 108-126; Matvčev, *op. cit.*, 76-78; Corti, *Battenberg*, 77; a completely distorted view of Russian policy is given by O. K. [Olga Kireeva Novikova], *Skobelev and the Slavonic cause* (London, 1883), 312-316.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

acceptance of the Treaty of Berlin and a policy of disinterestedness in Bulgaria.<sup>26</sup>

It was in this spirit that Giers advised Battenberg, in May 1879, to pay the greatest attention to the Treaty of Berlin, and in his subsequent visit to the European courts Prince Alexander succeeded in identifying with his person the policy of sincere adherence to the Berlin settlement. At the same time, however, Giers did not support the prince's attempt to amend the constitution in such a way as to increase his personal power, for he felt that this would be looked upon by England and Austria as a direct provocation, and he restricted himself to humoring the prince by securing the appointment of officials agreeable to him. The result was a conflict of Russian officials in Sofia which could only have a harmful effect on the initial efforts of the party system. On the one hand was General Parensov who lent his active support to the Liberals and combatted all signs of the influence of the prince and of other non-Slavic elements. On the other was A. P. Davydov, the Russian consul, who was not acquainted with the situation in the Balkans and who regarded the constitution as entirely unsuitable for Bulgaria. He supported the prince and the Conservatives and succeeded in greatly embittering the political scene as both parties felt that they were able to claim the backing of Russia.<sup>27</sup>

It was for this reason that Battenberg received the impression that the constitution, which was in fact backed by

<sup>26</sup> Ada von Erdmann, *Nikolaj Karlovič Giers, russischer Aussenminister 1882-1895. Eine politische Biographie* (Berlin, 1936), 16-17; Medlicott, *op. cit.*, 382-384; Tatishchev, *loc. cit.*, 361-363; Grimm, *loc. cit.*, 81-82.

<sup>27</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 64-65, 81-83; Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CI (1900), 593-594, CXXV (1906), 518-520; Erdmann, *op. cit.*, 32-35; Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung*, 165-166; Klaeber, *op. cit.*, 67-68; 84-86; Hans Uebersberger, "Bulgarien und Russland," *Vorträge der Gehe-Stiftung zu Dresden*, VIII (1917), 67-68; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 1, Sofia, January 7, 1880; "Davydov, Aleksandr Petrovich," *Russkii biograficheskii slovar* (25 vols.; St. Petersburg, 1896-1918), VI, 10-12.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the Russian government as a whole, had been concocted as a plot directed against him personally by a few irresponsible panslavs. He did not realize that the elements in the constitution which he found most objectionable had been added to the Russian draft by the Bulgarian extremists, and that the Russians supported it only because it seemed to be their best chance of maintaining their influence in Bulgaria without provoking the serious opposition of the other signatories of the Treaty of Berlin.

### THE ROLE OF THE WESTERN POWERS AND OF THE BALKAN STATES

THE beginnings of constitutional government in Bulgaria were still further complicated by the attitude of the Western powers and by their conflicting efforts to further their policies by supporting one or the other of the rival political parties. While Germany held aloof from any direct interference in Bulgarian affairs and instructed her representative to conduct himself “. . . in a completely neutral manner,”<sup>28</sup> the same could not be said of Austria-Hungary and England. These two countries, successful in preventing the achievement of the panslav ideals in the Near East, were greatly impressed by the danger that Russia might succeed in violating the Treaty of Berlin by taking advantage of her influence in Bulgaria. Austria in particular took a pessimistic view of the situation, and her representative was continually emphasizing the hold which Russia had secured in the new principality. As late as the winter of 1880, it seemed that nothing would be able to stop the Slavic avalanche which Russia had set in motion. “The fruits of the Russian policy in the Balkan peninsula are beginning to ripen,” Khevenhüller reported, “and I can see nothing

<sup>28</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 37, Tirnovo, February 24, 1879; Heinrich Bennecke, *Bulgarien in die Politik Bismarcks bis zur Thronbesteigung Ferdinands von Coburg* (Dresden, 1930), 1-3.

## *The Prince and the European Powers*

that might prevent the final triumph of these ends. . . . In Eastern Rumelia and in Bulgaria the Russians are the complete masters. The Bulgaria of San Stefano is the banner which is everywhere borne on high."<sup>29</sup>

As a result of this common fear, Austria and England embarked on a policy of coöperation which continued for some two years after the signing of the Treaty of Berlin. Its main effort was directed against the extension of Russian influence in Eastern Rumelia and in Macedonia, but it was also reflected in the policies of these two powers in Bulgaria. The British representative in Bulgaria received specific instructions to work in close coöperation with his Austrian colleague, and in Vienna Andrassy placed a great reliance on this arrangement for the immediate purpose of enforcing the Treaty of Berlin. While this common policy was of a temporary nature, it was nevertheless the result of a fundamental desire on the part of both powers to see Russian activity restrained so far as possible.<sup>30</sup>

The aims of this coöperative policy did not, however, go beyond the obvious one of combatting Russian power in Bulgaria. Neither Austria nor England laid any claim to Bulgaria as a sphere of influence. The Austrian aims were stated in a simple and straightforward fashion in a despatch of her representative to his chief. "If I understand the views of Your Excellency correctly, there are two aims to be attained in Bulgaria for the furtherance of our interests there. The first is the suppression of Russian influence and the dismissal of Russian officials. The second is the restriction so far as possible of the development of the Bulgarian army."<sup>31</sup> This statement of policy is notable both for its

<sup>29</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 5, Sofia, January 28, 1880; similar views are expressed in Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 15, Sofia, January 1, 1879; and Khevenhüller to Haymerle, XV. 17, No. 43, Sofia, December 14, 1880; see also Sumner, *op. cit.*, 570-571.

<sup>30</sup> To Palgrave, F. O. 78/2981, January 6, 1879; Medlicott, *op. cit.*, 373-374.

<sup>31</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 19, Sofia, May 1, 1880.

clarity and for the accuracy with which Khevenhüller laid his finger on the means of Russian aggression. The British consul defined his objective in a similar way, but indicated that the best way to achieve it would be to enter the political struggle and to support those groups within Bulgaria which opposed the influence of Russia.<sup>32</sup>

It was perhaps characteristic of Austria and England that, while their aims were identical and while they made a concerted effort to achieve them, their respective methods of approach to the problem were so different that within a few years they found themselves in direct opposition to each other. While Khevenhüller tried to gain the confidence of the prince and sought through the increase in his powers to diminish the influence of Russia, Palgrave placed his reliance on the nationalist spirit of the Liberal Party. The Austrian consul realized that the Bulgarian people as a whole, and especially their leaders, were well aware of the role which his country had played in the destruction of San Stefano Bulgaria and that to them Russia was still Bulgaria's great friend. If some of the nationalist leaders were already showing a Russophobe bias, that was no guarantee that they would be able to prevent the Russian officials from quietly building up a strong Bulgarian army. For this reason Khevenhüller gave his support to the Russian consul, Davydov, and agreed with him that Bulgaria was not ready for a constitution. On the contrary, no order would be achieved until the position of the prince had been strengthened. Unless the prince were given wide powers, the Bulgarian state would fall apart and Russian aims would be achieved. The constitution was little more than a Russian plan for creating anarchy in Bulgaria, and Battemberg was the only person who could restore order. Such arguments doubtless came naturally to an Austrian aristo-

<sup>32</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 212, Sofia, November 7, 1879.

## The Prince and the European Powers

crat, and he had little difficulty in gathering evidence to support his view.<sup>33</sup>

While Serbia and Rumania made no attempt to interfere in Bulgarian politics during this period, their fears had been aroused in much the same way as Austria's and it was not long before they became a part of her political system. In Serbia, Austria succeeded in gaining a position of political and economic dominance such as Russia hoped for but never achieved in Bulgaria.<sup>34</sup> Rumania was in a somewhat different position. Her adherence to Bismarck's alliance system was due both to direct antagonism to Russia and to the fear of a large Bulgaria resulting from Russian activity. So far as Bulgaria was concerned, however, the cordial relations between Carol and Alexander did a great deal to prevent unnecessary friction. In the autumn of 1880 the two sovereigns met at Ruschuk, and Carol noted with pleasure that while the Bulgarian army was in fine shape, the country itself was by no means a tool of Russia. They both agreed that a German prince in the Balkans should have a firm and independent policy, and both resented the activities of the panslavs.<sup>35</sup> Greece was also motivated by fear of Russian designs, and for a while she flirted with Austria in the hopes of being able to play the two powers off against each other. This hope was shattered by the *Dreikaiserbund*, however, and Greece was forced to attempt a separate understanding with Turkey.<sup>36</sup> The importance

<sup>33</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 1, Sofia, January 7, 1880; No. 3, Sofia, January 21, 1880; No. 13, Sofia, March 17, 1880.

<sup>34</sup> William L. Langer, *European alliances and alignments, 1871-1890* (New York, 1931), 324-330; Matvéev, *op. cit.*, 6-7.

<sup>35</sup> Langer, *op. cit.*, 330-334; Jehan de Witte, *Quinze ans d'histoire, 1866-1881, d'après les mémoires du roi de Roumanie et les témoignages contemporains* (Paris, 1905), 432-434; Lilio Cialdea, *La politica estera della Romania nel quarantennio prebellico* (Bologna, 1933), 174-176; *Aus dem Leben König Karls von Rumänien, Aufzeichnungen eines Augenzeugen* (4 vols.; Stuttgart, 1894-1900), IV, 291, 358-360.

<sup>36</sup> Edouard Driault et Michel Lhéritier, *Histoire diplomatique de la*



## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

of these developments for the Tirnovo Constitution was that in her attempt to support the prince in his struggle with the National Assembly, Austria was able to count on the moral support of her Balkan allies.

The British representative in Bulgaria approached the same problem from an entirely different point of view. While Palgrave was neither a polished gentleman like his Austrian colleague nor personally attractive, for in Sofia he had the reputation of being very queer, even for an Englishman, it must be admitted that he made a masterly analysis of the political situation in Bulgaria. A democrat at heart, he was favorably impressed by the Tirnovo Constitution and apparently went on the assumption that it was a permanent feature of the Bulgarian scene. Taking Bulgarian nationalism at its true value, after his initial fears had been dispersed, he decided that Russian influence could be counteracted not by supporting a prince who was unpopular, but rather by lending his influence to the anti-Russian elements within the regular political system.

The origin of Palgrave's policy can probably be traced to his early discovery of the fact that the ardent Bulgarian nationalists who were willing to go to any extreme to sabotage the Treaty of Berlin were not Russian agents. This was contrary to the view generally accepted in Western Europe at the time, and it is to Palgrave's credit that he informed his government of his discovery while the Constitutional Assembly was still in progress. As a matter of fact, in one of his first references to him, Zwiedinek mentions the fact that his British colleague was something of a busybody who was exerting great efforts to gain influence with Dondukov and the panbulgarians.<sup>37</sup> Palgrave went too far, however,

*Grèce de 1821 à nos jours* (5 vols.; Paris, 1925-26), IV, 158-164; Sumner, *op. cit.*, 569.

<sup>37</sup> Zwiedinek to Andrassy, H. H. S., XII. 222, No. 37, Tirnovo, February 24, 1879; Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 17, Tirnovo, February 21, 1879; see above, 74.



## *The Prince and the European Powers*

in attributing Russophile tendencies to the moderate group in the Constitutional Assembly. "What strength and cohesion it has," he reported, "are due solely to actual Russian presence; the moment that presence is withdrawn it will fall to pieces, though leaving behind it a permanent and compact Russophile nucleus in the clergy."<sup>38</sup> In the extremist group, on the other hand, he detected the spirit of opposition to all foreign influence as well as ". . . the elements not merely of permanence, but also, though at present in a minority within the Assembly, of ultimate majority."<sup>39</sup> He soon realized, however, that both the extremists and the moderates were essentially nationalists when it came to foreign interference in their affairs.

Palgrave was thus able to quiet the apprehensions of Layard who wrote for information on panslav activity. "Panslav agitators," he replied, "did any such exist here, would be as ineffective as in Belgium or Holland. The inhabitants of the Principality have no sympathy or care for any race whatever outside; being fully and sufficiently occupied with their own affairs, their internal organization, and their local interests. Revolutionary Agents, were they to attempt anything, would be strangely out of place among a people the chief desire and expectancy of which at the present moment is the arrival and installation of its legitimate Prince."<sup>40</sup>

The British consul foresaw that the democratic and the anti-Russian tendencies which he noted at the Constitutional Assembly were basic factors in the Bulgarian political pattern, and he concluded that if England was to achieve her ends she must pay particular attention to them. He reported that ". . . both the tendencies noted appear to be likely to intensify themselves rather than otherwise in

<sup>38</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 46, Tirnovo, March 25, 1879.

<sup>39</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 46, Tirnovo, March 25, 1879.

<sup>40</sup> Palgrave to Layard, F. O. 78/2983, No. 113, Sofia, June 20, 1879.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

lapse of time; though internal causes may very possibly counteract the first, and external ones the second. Otherwise they will probably be alike durable and effectual.”<sup>41</sup> In effect, Palgrave advocated the support of the Liberal Party, and immediately became deeply involved in local politics. In the heat of the moment, he undoubtedly went too far in embracing the cause of the Liberals, for he described them as the party “. . . which desires to model the country, within reasonable limits, on English institutions, and which looks steadily towards English support. . . .”<sup>42</sup> As a means of combatting panslav influence, however, events soon proved that he was entirely justified in supporting the nationalism and the democracy of the Liberals. Palgrave stood firmly by his convictions, and when Battenberg complained of the radical views of the Liberals he assured him that he need have no fear of “. . . revolutionary, communistic, or nihilistic tendencies . . . and that the noblest applause His Highness could win from Europe, and from England in particular, would be by unshaken adherence to Constitutional principles and measures.”<sup>43</sup>

The stage was now set for a serious constitutional struggle. The young prince was determined to increase his own powers, and he received the encouragement of the Conservative Party and of the Austrian consul as well as the sympathy of some of the Russian officials. The large and nationalistic Liberal Party, on the other hand, had found its strength in the Tirnovo Assembly and was prepared to

<sup>41</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2982, No. 60, Constantinople, April 14, 1879.

<sup>42</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 212, Sofia, November 7, 1879; the Foreign Office was not convinced, however, for Austrian complaints of his pro-Liberal policy led to Palgrave's transfer to Bangkok on November 26, 1879; W. N. M., "Palgrave, William Gifford," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, VIII (1930-31), 43.

<sup>43</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 179, Sofia, September 27, 1879.

*The Prince and the European Powers*

insist that the prince's position was entirely secondary to that of the assembly. In this view it received the active support both of the Russian military officials and of the British consul. The first test of strength came with the opening of the National Assembly.

## CHAPTER VII. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN PRINCE AND ASSEMBLY, 1879-1881

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### THE FIRST CABINET

**A**RRIVING in Bulgaria early in June 1879 after visiting the capitals of the leading states in Europe, Prince Alexander's first problem was the formation of a cabinet to govern the country until the first regular National Assembly met. This task was rendered particularly difficult by the fact that he was as yet unacquainted with conditions in Bulgaria, and therefore had to rely almost entirely on the advice of the Russian officials and of his personal suite. So far as the constitution itself was concerned, Battenberg's only guide was Article 153, which had probably been added to the Russian draft of the Organic Statute by Professor Gradovski at St. Petersburg. It bore a strong resemblance to the French constitutional law of February 25, 1875, and provided that "Ministers are responsible to the prince and to the National Assembly collectively for whatever measures they take in common. . . ." <sup>1</sup> It is possible, therefore, to argue that Alexander should have chosen his first cabinet from the members of the Liberal Party, as they had been in a majority in the Constitutional Assembly. On the other hand, the Tirnovo Assembly had been only partially elective and did not fall strictly within the meaning of the Article 153.

Under these circumstances, the logical thing to do was to appoint a coalition ministry to serve until the will of the people had been expressed in a regular election. This the

<sup>1</sup> S. Balamezov, "Kak e bil vüveden parlamentarniyat rezhim v Bülgariya" [How the parliamentary system was introduced into Bulgaria], *Otets Paisiit*, II (1929), 149-150.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

prince was advised to do by Colonel A. A. Shepelev, an aide-de-camp of the emperor who had been assigned as his personal representative at the Bulgarian court, and who had met the prince at Brindisi and accompanied him to Bulgaria. Both the lack of experienced politicians and the desire of the prince to see all the leaders working in harmony recommended the idea of a coalition ministry, and the Russian and Bulgarian advisers of Battenberg agreed that it was the most sensible thing to do.<sup>2</sup>

Stoilov, whom Battenberg had appointed as his private secretary, was entrusted with the negotiations and he immediately encountered a number of difficulties. Professor M. S. Drinov, the first man approached, refused to enter into the political struggle. Stoilov then telegraphed Tsankov, informing him that Battenberg desired to include him in a cabinet with Karavelov, Nachevich, Grekov and Burmov. Tsankov, however, resented being summoned by Stoilov, whom he considered a young upstart, and also refused to be in the same cabinet with Grekov, with whom he had a personal feud. He therefore delayed answering Stoilov's telegram for two days, and in the end refused entirely to coöperate. It was probably not without relief that Battenberg now turned to the Conservatives. Stoilov, Grekov and Nachevich were among the few Bulgarians with whom he could converse readily in German and who were willing to aid him in his plans.<sup>3</sup>

In order to strengthen his personal position it was neces-

<sup>2</sup> P. A. Matvëev, *Bolgariya poslë Berlinskago Kongressa. Istoricheskii ocherk* [Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin. A historical sketch] (St. Petersburg, 1887), 72-73; P. Milyukov, *Bûlgarskata konstitutsiya* [The Bulgarian constitution] (Salonica, 1905), 43-45.

<sup>3</sup> P. D. Parensov, "V Bolgarii. (Vospominaniya ofitsera general'nago shtaba)" [In Bulgaria (Recollections of an officer of the general staff)] *Russkaya starina*, CI (1900), 372-375; Iv. Ev. Geshov, *Spomeni iz godini na borbi i pobëdi* [Memories of years of struggles and victories] (Sofia, 1916), 115-116; E. C. Corti, *Alexander von Battenberg. Sein Kampf mit den Zaren und Bismarck* (Wien, 1920), 66-67.

sary for the prince to gain control both of the civil government and of the army. The former he hoped to do with the consent of Russia, and in this he had the full sympathy of the Conservatives. The latter was a more delicate problem, which involved a resignation on the part of the Russians of a great deal of their influence, and here the prince could not be sure of the sincere support of his cabinet.<sup>4</sup> The cabinet in its final form was composed of men noted more for their general ability and integrity than for their experience in political affairs. Burmov was appointed minister-president and minister of interior, and was aided by Grekov, Balabanov and Nachevich as ministers of justice, foreign affairs and finance, respectively. Atanasovich, a little known professor of gynecology from Bucharest, was made minister of education, and General Parensov was placed in charge of military affairs. The principal task of this cabinet, aside from taking over the administration of the country from the Russians, was to prepare for the October elections.<sup>5</sup>

The announcement of the cabinet on July 17 was celebrated with a banquet, which was marred by the beginning of a ridiculous but bitter controversy over the prince's title. That Battenberg should have picked on this issue was perhaps characteristic of his training, and it cast a shadow over his relations with the Liberals and with his minister of war from the very start. In Article 6 of the constitution the prince's title had been designated, probably through the

<sup>4</sup> S. Skazkin, *Konets avstro-russko-germanskogo soyuza* [The end of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance] (Vol. I; Moscow, 1928), I, 228-229.

<sup>5</sup> Simeon Radev, *Stroitelitë na suvrëmnenna Bülgariya* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1911), I, 159-163; D. Marinov, *Stefan Stambolov i novëshata ni istoriya (Lëtöpisni spomeni i ocherki)* [Stefan Stambolov and our recent history (Chronological memoirs and sketches)] (Sofia, 1909), 97-102; Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1939), 165-166; Adolf Koch, *Fürst Alexander von Bulgarien. Mittheilungen aus seinem Leben und seiner Regierung nach persönlichen Erinnerungen* (Darmstadt, 1887), 20-24.

### *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

ignorance and negligence of the men responsible for its drafting, as "Excellency," and that of the heir-apparent as "Serenity."<sup>6</sup> This the prince considered a serious error, as "Highness" was the title due to a person of his rank, and he had no trouble in convincing the Conservatives that they should use the correct term. Parensov, on the other hand, took a firm stand on the constitution and, while he admitted that the title might not be appropriate, refused to use any other until a formal constitutional amendment had been made. Battenberg regarded this attitude as a personal insult and, even after Parensov compromised to the extent of using the term "Altesse" when addressing the prince in French, the feeling of mutual suspicion which had been aroused did not subside.<sup>7</sup>

The Liberal press immediately seized this issue as one worthy of a violent campaign, and in an early issue of the *Tsĕlokupna Bŭlgariya* (Integral Bulgaria) Stambolov came out with an article entitled "The constitution is being violated." So far as the title was concerned, he agreed with Parensov that it was unconstitutional to call the prince anything but "Excellency" until a formal amendment had been put through. He also discovered several other violations of the fundamental law. The Conservative paper *Vitoshka*, it appears, had taken to referring to Balabanov as "His Excellency," and this was contrary to Article 58, which forbade "Titles of nobility or rank, as well as orders and decorations. . . ." And finally, Stambolov protested against the inclusion of Burmov and Grekov in the cabinet on the grounds that the former was a Russian citizen and the latter a Rumanian. All this he adduced as evidence that the Conservative ministry was using unconstitutional meth-

<sup>6</sup> The titles "Excellency" and "Serenity" are rather arbitrary translations of the terms *svĕtlost* and *siyatelstvo* used in the constitution, as there is no accepted translation for these forms.

<sup>7</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CI (1900), 378-381.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

ods in its conduct of affairs, and that the minister-president himself was a foreign citizen and had no right to be a member of the government.<sup>8</sup>

In the meantime, Prince Alexander was very much dissatisfied with the way things were going. He had never held the Russians in very high esteem as honest administrators, and he soon discovered that their regime in Bulgaria was not above reproach. In July he wrote to Prince Carol I, his Rumanian colleague, complaining of the inefficiency and graft of the Russian officials. "My position here is really terrible," he complained, "I refuse to do anything that goes against my conscience, and I am therefore forced to write to Emperor Alexander frequently in order to contradict the slanders of the local Russian officials."<sup>9</sup> Even the Conservative ministry turned out to be less active than he had hoped. In August he again wrote Carol to tell him that he would have to postpone his visit to Bucharest until October, because of his difficulties in Sofia. "My ministers are all rather timid," he added, "and I have to make practically all the decisions myself."<sup>10</sup>

The result of all of his troubles in Sofia was a direct appeal to Emperor Alexander. The emperor answered in some detail in his letter of September 28/October 10, admitting that the constitution was not all that could be desired, but reminding the prince of the difficulties of the international situation and recommending the greatest of caution on his part. To quote his own words:

"The great problem in making the necessary changes is to have a policy firm and persevering in the pursuit of its aims, but at the same time cautious and moderate in the choice of its means, keeping within the limits of legal action

<sup>8</sup> S. Stambolov, "Konstitutsiyata se narushava" [The constitution is being violated], *Tselokupna Bŭlgariya*, I, No. 9 (July 25/August 6, 1879), 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Aus dem Leben König Karls von Rumänien, Aufzeichnungen eines Augenzeugen* (4 vols.; Stuttgart, 1894-1900), IV, 223.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 245.



## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

and making the best possible use of the passage of time, which will bring into sharper focus the handicaps of the present institutions. Whatever may be the faults of the Tirnovo Constitution, we must not forget that you yourself have solemnly accepted it. It is within the framework of this constitution that you should first attempt to revise it, in order to establish it in a form more appropriate for the needs of Bulgaria. . . ."<sup>11</sup>

It was in this spirit of embittered political strife, with the prince discontented both with the Russians and with the Conservatives, that the cabinet proceeded with its task of holding the elections for the National Assembly, which were scheduled for September 30/October 12, 1879. As these were the first regular elections to be held in Bulgaria, it is important to examine the details of procedure. The electoral law, which had been drawn up hastily on the last day of the Constitutional Assembly, provided that the county and municipal councils should draw up lists of all the male citizens over twenty-one years of age. Provisions were made to guarantee the right of the citizens to challenge these lists. The electoral districts were to include not less than 2000 houses, and the voting was to take place on a holiday between the hours of 7 A.M. and 3 P.M. To be declared elected, a deputy was required to receive at least one-fourth of the votes cast on the first day, or a plurality of the votes cast at the supplementary election held one week later.<sup>12</sup>

This method of election was declared by Count Khevenhüller to be frivolous and senseless,<sup>13</sup> but in fact the actual results were probably due as much to the lack of experience of the voters as to the ineptitude of the regulations. Out of

<sup>11</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 229, n. 1.

<sup>12</sup> M. K. Sarafov, "Nashitě legislativni izbori" [Our legislative elections], *Periodicheshko spisanie*, IV (1885), 28-32; Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung*, 166-167.

<sup>13</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 77.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

a total population of some 1,800,000, the number of those declared eligible to vote in September 1879 amounted to 219,000. Of those eligible, only 32 per cent participated in the elections. Participation varied from 55 per cent in the district of Varna, which was largely Turkish in population, to 31.6 per cent in Sofia. It is also interesting to note that one-quarter of the members of this first assembly were elected by less than 10 per cent of the eligible voters in their electoral districts, and 66 members by less than 20 per cent of the voters.<sup>14</sup>

As for the conduct of the elections themselves, the reports vary somewhat. The British representative was favorably impressed by what he saw in Sofia. "Canvassing, electioneering, tours, meetings, speeches, newspaper controversies, and the like, are going on briskly on either side," he reported. "Bribery as understood in Western Europe is not, nor is ever likely to be, an adjunct of Bulgarian elections. Both parties, with creditable tact, avoid bringing the name, actions, or intentions of His Highness the Prince into discussion."<sup>15</sup>

While the official campaigning may have been conducted on a fairly high level, a careful study of electoral procedure before the important reform of 1896 has been published which reveals that the first laws provided openings for a number of serious abuses. To this was added the fact that there had been no regular elections in Bulgaria before the liberation. The occasional committees and the church and school boards had been arranged in a patriarchal fashion by the prominent citizens, and the greater part of the population was unacquainted with the traditional electoral procedure of democratic government. As a result, the actual day of the election, as distinct from the campaigning which preceded it, was frequently the witness of unruly behavior.

<sup>14</sup> Sarafov, *loc. cit.*, IV (1885), 33-34, 44-45.

<sup>15</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 186, Sofia, October 6, 1879.

### *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

As one authority describes it, "Our elector, and especially the one who expects to play an active role, becomes greatly agitated on the eve of the elections. He is seized with violent paroxysms and by a strange feeling akin to spiritual intoxication which is frequently, if not always, accompanied by complete drunkenness."<sup>16</sup>

The weakest feature of the law was that part which provided for the electoral bureaus which had jurisdiction over the conduct of the elections. These bureaus were publicly elected on the morning of the election day, and their powers were such that ". . . the capture of the bureau by one of the competing parties was considered, and rightly, as the winning of the chief positions of the enemy—it decided 99 per cent of the result of the election." The means used to gain control of the bureaus were fully equal to the importance of the prize. A small group of partisans would arrive at the polling place early, and blockade it so as to prevent the opposition members from taking part in the election of the bureau. If both parties had already gained entrance to the election room, ". . . nudges, shoves, blocking, unclothing, needles and red pepper . . ." were all used to prevent the members of the opposition from being elected to the bureau. The bureau itself, once elected, frequently engaged in illegal practices for the purpose of influencing the results of the elections. Opposition ballots were destroyed, partisans were allowed to vote twice under different names, and so on.<sup>17</sup>

To what extent this particular election was marred by riots, it is difficult to say. According to one report, hostile to the Conservatives, the opposition devoted a great deal of time to campaigning, whereas the government relied on

<sup>16</sup> D. K. Vogazli, "Préstápleniyata po izboritě izobshoto i chastno v Bŭlgariya" [Electoral abuses in general and particularly in Bulgaria], *Yuridicheski pregled*, X (1902), 118-119, 381-383.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, X (1902), 383-386.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

more subtle methods of influencing the electors. In only two towns did riots occur serious enough to warrant the intervention of the army.<sup>18</sup> The fact that only one-third of those eligible to vote went to the polls may be sufficiently accounted for by the lack of experience on the part of the people. The best evidence that the government did not exercise illegal pressure to any great extent is the fact that the opposition won by an overwhelming majority.

### BATTENBERG AND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

OF the 170 members of the National Assembly, which had its first session on October 21/November 2, 1879, Burmov's Conservative cabinet could rely on the support of only 30.<sup>19</sup> Battenberg was now faced with the problem of dealing with an assembly which was eager to reduce his powers as far as possible, and he was determined to maintain his position. The immediate question was whether he would be able to keep his Conservative cabinet in the face of a hostile assembly. Article 152 of the constitution provided that the ministers were to be appointed and dismissed by the prince. A literal interpretation of this article seemed to give the prince considerable leeway, and in demanding it Battenberg was supported by the Russian and Austrian consuls and, strangely enough, by Stambolov. Karavelov, on the other hand, insisted on the English practice, and claimed that the prince's right of appointing ministers was only formal. He was under obligation to pick his ministers from the majority party.<sup>20</sup> In the end, Karavelov's interpretation was accepted, but not until all other means had been tried.

The assembly, well aware that it could expect no favors from the government, proceeded to act in defiance of the

<sup>18</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1906), 71-72.

<sup>19</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 173.

<sup>20</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 120-122; Milyukov, *op. cit.*, 46.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

Conservatives. As president of the assembly it elected Karavelov, with two of his colleagues as vice-presidents.<sup>21</sup> The Liberals also prevented an attempted boycott of the assembly by the Conservatives, who then tried to have Stambolov's election annulled because of his youth. However, although he was five years under the legal age-limit of thirty, the assembly confirmed his election.<sup>22</sup> The great opportunity of the Liberals came when they drew up the answer to the throne speech. It addressed the prince as "Excellency," it implied by the form of its gesture of thanks to the Russian Empire that the prince was subordinate to the assembly, and it accused the Burmov ministry of acting unconstitutionally on several occasions.<sup>23</sup>

This the prince considered a direct blow to his prestige, and in this opinion he was backed by the Conservatives. But Battenberg did not want to exercise his constitutional right of dissolving the assembly unless it were absolutely necessary. In this view he may have been influenced by the fact that such a dissolution would have delayed the passage of the budget.<sup>24</sup> The only two alternatives to dissolution were a Liberal cabinet and a coalition cabinet. As regards the former, there was a real split between the Russian advisers. Davydov, on the one hand, agreed with the prince that he should under no circumstances give the government over entirely to the Liberals, and joined Stoilov in recommending that a coalition cabinet be formed until Battenberg could obtain permission from the emperor to have the constitution amended.<sup>25</sup> Parensov and Shepelev, on the other hand, regarded the dissolution of the National Assembly as a dangerous proposal. Not only would it create

<sup>21</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 109-110.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 111-118; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 175-176; Georges Bousquet, *Histoire du peuple bulgare depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1909), 203.

<sup>23</sup> K. Stoilov, "Dnevniatsi. Politicheskata kriza v 1879 godina" [Diary. The political crisis in 1879], *Bŭlgarska misŭl*, I (1925), 16; Koch, *op. cit.*, 24-25.

<sup>24</sup> Stoilov, *loc. cit.*, I (1925), 30-31, 138.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, I (1925), 15.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

a serious breach between prince and assembly and disturb the normal progress within the country, but it would also permit a critical Europe to say that Russia had made a serious blunder in giving the Bulgarians a form of government which they were not capable of handling. They therefore held that the proper thing to do would be to turn the government over to the Liberals if a coalition cabinet could not be formed. The Liberals, after all, they argued, were not the devils their critics had made them out to be. If they were radical, it was only because they opposed the government. In power, they would be ardent defenders of the public order.<sup>26</sup> It was in this form that the conflict between the two branches of Russian policy now reappeared, and it could not fail to diminish Russian prestige in Bulgaria.

To Battenberg and his advisers, the course was now clear. Their ultimate aim was to revise the constitution, and if possible they wished to avoid both the dissolution of the assembly and the formation of a completely Liberal cabinet. The amendments desired by Battenberg, as reported by Shepelev to Milyutin, included the restriction of the freedom of press and of assembly, a change of the prince's title, the right to confer military orders and a simplification of the provisions for amending the constitution.<sup>27</sup> When the Burmov cabinet resigned as a result of the hostile answer to the throne speech, Battenberg and the Conservatives agreed that the safest policy would be to get a coalition cabinet which would enjoy the confidence of the assembly. Having thus assured the passage of the budget and a degree of political calm, the prince would be in a better position to discuss the question of amending the constitution on his next visit to Russia.<sup>28</sup>

The negotiations for a coalition cabinet began immediately. The chief points in which Prince Alexander was in-

<sup>26</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CXXV (1906), 510-511, 513.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, CXXV (1906), 514-515.

<sup>28</sup> Stoilov, *loc. cit.*, I (1925), 15-16.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

terested were relations with Turkey, the need for a press law and for a disciplined civil service, and the admission of foreigners into government service. In a tense interview with Karavelov on November 14/26, the prince discussed these matters in an attempt to find common ground. The interview was not a success. Karavelov, who kept referring to the prince as "Your Excellency," had no precise idea as to the details of his party's platform and in any case was in no mood to compromise with the prince. Overcome by the strain, Battenberg and Stoilov both broke into tears as soon as Karavelov had left. In contrast to the Liberals, Grekov and Nachevich had a clear idea of what they wanted to do. The strict observance of the Treaty of Berlin and the just satisfaction of the Turkish claims were taken for granted, for no extravagant ideas of nationalism could be permitted to interfere with the internal development of the state. As for the press, a law was necessary which would protect both the government and private individuals. Foreigners should be admitted into the government service, Russians in those positions which involved direct contact with the people and others in office work. And finally, the prince's prerogatives should be maintained at all costs, and every effort should be made to popularize the monarchical principle. This was a program such as Battenberg could honestly approve, and it was his problem to find a cabinet which would support it and at the same time retain the confidence of the assembly.<sup>29</sup>

Eager to aid the Liberals, the British agent went to some pains to see that they received their constitutional rights without undue friction. It is not difficult to imagine that as an Englishman he was regarded as an authority on constitutional practice. According to his own account, he served

<sup>29</sup> Stoilov, *loc. cit.*, I (1925), 17-18; Eumène Queillé, *Les commencements de l'indépendance bulgare et le Prince Alexandre. Souvenirs d'un français de Sofia* (Paris, 1910), 34-35.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

as mediator between Battenberg and the opposition, and went so far as to draw up a program for the change of cabinets with the least possible disturbance. The candidates for the new ministry would promise to “. . . repress any attempt on the part of the members of the Assembly to impeach, prosecute, or otherwise molest the members of the late cabinet for any irregularity during their past tenure of office.” Palgrave’s aim was to provide a program which “. . . while ensuring the constitutional downfall of the present ministry, will prevent their gaining any advantage from the reaction which might follow any extreme measure on the part of their opponents.”<sup>30</sup>

But the problem which worried Palgrave was simple when compared with that of finding a point of compromise between the two parties. After the first interview, the exchange of opinions continued. It turned out that Karavelov had been favorably impressed with Prince Alexander, and he now proposed that Stoilov join the coalition cabinet as minister of foreign affairs. The prince’s secretary refused to leave his strategic post, however, and Battenberg backed him up, saying that he was saving him for the future. Tsankov was next interviewed by the prince, but here again no agreement was reached. The wily Liberal was under the impression that Davydov and Stoilov were planning some sort of a *coup d’état*. This was an extreme view of the situation. Davydov merely believed that Russian policy should rely on the elements of order in Bulgaria, and that these were represented by the Conservative Party.<sup>31</sup>

While Karavelov tried to find a sufficient number of sympathizers who would be both able and willing to form a cabinet under his leadership, the main issue of the negotiations changed to the question of altering the answer to the throne speech. If the assembly would revise certain of

<sup>30</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 212, Sofia, November 7, 1879.

<sup>31</sup> Stoilov, *loc. cit.*, I (1925), 19-24.



## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

its criticisms of the government, Battenberg would feel much more comfortable with the Liberals participating in the cabinet. On November 18/30 Karavelov saw the prince a second time. On this occasion he addressed him as "Your Highness" and promised that the National Assembly would make the necessary changes in its pronouncement. His control over the Liberal majority in the assembly was not complete, however, and during a stormy secret session that same afternoon he found himself unable to fulfill his promise to the prince. For several days the interviews and conversations continued, and it soon became clear that the Liberals were neither able to form a ministry of their own nor were they willing to compromise with their Conservative opponents. During the negotiations, the German and French consuls both gave the prince their support and urged that he maintain his control over the government. An interesting result of this cabinet crisis was that, while he had been unable to make any headway with his large parliamentary majority, Karavelov's contacts with the prince had brought about a great change in their respective attitudes. Karavelov admitted that Battenberg's demands were not unreasonable, and made an honest effort to win the assembly over to this point of view. Prince Alexander, on the other hand, discovered that the Liberal leader was far more willing to compromise than he had been led to expect.<sup>32</sup>

Yielding to the advice of Davydov and Stoilov, Prince Alexander finally exercised his prerogative of dissolving the National Assembly on November 24/December 6, 1879. On the same day a new Conservative cabinet was announced with Bishop Kliment as minister-president. General Parensov viewed the dissolution of the assembly with serious misgivings. To him it seemed that the difficulties raised by this act would greatly outweigh the benefits gained from it. Under Article 137 of the constitution, the

<sup>32</sup> Stoilov, *loc. cit.*, I (1925), 25-31, 138-149; Queillé, *op. cit.*, 35.

government was required to hold new elections within two months after the dissolution of the assembly, and Parensov saw no reason to believe that the new assembly would not have fully as large a Liberal majority as the recent one. To dissolve the assembly, therefore, merely meant postponing the problem of getting a working majority and at the same time greatly increasing the bitterness of feeling between the two parties. Battenberg's one hope was that he would be able to have the constitution amended before a new crisis arose.<sup>33</sup>

The chief objection to Battenberg's dissolution of the assembly was the fact that it set a precedent of suspicion, distrust and drastic action at a time when he should have been willing to sacrifice certain of his personal views and predilections for the benefit of the general political welfare of the country. The Liberals now felt that the prince was their enemy, and they saw no reason to spare him. Nor were the objections of the Liberals entirely political in nature. Ashburnham, the new British agent, reported that the dissolution ". . . would seem not to have met with disapproval except from the members themselves, to the majority of whom the loss of fifteen francs per diem, the allowance made whilst the Chambers were sitting, was a very serious matter."<sup>34</sup>

In the midst of the cabinet crisis, on November 15/27, both Battenberg and his father had written to Alexander II bringing to his notice the danger to the prince's prestige in Bulgaria and requesting permission to make the desired alterations in the constitution.<sup>35</sup> Just how far Prince Alexander wanted to go at the time, it is difficult to

<sup>33</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 180; A. S. Tsanov, *Pŕvii bŕlgarskii knyaz* [The first Bulgarian prince] (Plovdiv, 1895), 22; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 122-124; Koch, *op. cit.*, 26-27.

<sup>34</sup> Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 231, Sofia, December 9, 1879.

<sup>35</sup> Egon Corti, *The downfall of three dynasties* (London, 1934), 263.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

say, but the impression one receives from his comments is that he desired a strongly bureaucratic administration which would have the right to employ a large number of foreign experts. The assembly would be restricted to the discussion and approval of the budget and of taxes. It was not until December 16/28, 1879, that the emperor answered the prince's request. This reply was characterized by the same note of caution as was his earlier letter:

"It seems to me that great circumspection is called for. It must not be forgotten that the existing Constitution of Bulgaria was prepared according to the decrees of the Treaty of Berlin, by the representatives of the nation, to whom complete liberty of decision was expressly reserved by my orders. The Constitution has been recognized by all the Powers, as it emerged from their deliberations. Direct intervention on my part to abolish it and to grant a new one would expose me to the accusation of exercising illegal intervention in the affairs of the Principality. Hence it is not desirable to proceed by this means to remedy the difficulties that experience has shown to exist. On the other hand, a *coup d'état* effected by your authority in order to abolish the Constitution would furnish the pretext for an agitation dangerous to yourself and to the country.

"Hence I think . . . that some means of modifying an order of things that has led to so unhappy a state of affairs must be sought in legitimate channels and with the greatest possible discretion."<sup>86</sup>

The emperor then proceeded to advise Prince Alexander to hold the new elections under the requirements of the constitution, and in the meantime to bring his influence to bear on the people in a legal fashion ". . . so as to induce in them a sounder appreciation of their interests and of the interests of the country." He also gave him full power to use the emperor's name whenever it should seem necessary

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 372; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 230.

during the electoral campaign.<sup>37</sup> Alexander II hoped that this new assembly would be aware of the seriousness of the situation, but he realized that it might continue in its resistance to the prince, and was prepared for such an eventuality:

“If things turn out otherwise, you will, after this fair attempt which will attest in the eyes of Europe your wish to respect the laws, be justified in having recourse to stronger measures. You can dissolve the Chamber once the impossibility of governing with it has been proved, then appeal to the country by convoking a general meeting, at which you can propose a new constitution revised with the necessary maturity and in accordance with the experience that has been acquired.”<sup>38</sup>

These were merely meant as suggestions to Battenberg, not as binding instructions, and both in this letter and in the instructions received by Davydov at the same time the fact was emphasized that in the last analysis the decision would have to be made in Sofia.<sup>39</sup> If, after taking everything into consideration, Battenberg felt that an immediate change in the constitution was indispensable, he was free to make it. But in a characteristically Russian mood of optimism, Emperor Alexander advised against hasty action. “Given time,” he concluded, “everything will settle itself, and the conservative elements which are present in an agricultural people, though sorely tried, are industrious and resistant, and will come to the fore again in the end.”<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime, the new cabinet under Bishop Kliment was busy preparing for the new elections. The purpose of appointing the bishop as minister-president was apparently to give the ministry as non-partisan a character as

<sup>37</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 372; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 231.

<sup>38</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 373; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 231.

<sup>39</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 231, n. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Corti, *Downfall of three dynasties*, 374.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

possible, and to inspire the confidence of the people. Although doubts have been cast on the personal integrity and private life of Bishop Kliment, he was a man of some literary ability and of a liberal outlook. His belief in political freedom differed from that of the politicians, however, for he regarded it as merely incidental in man's progress towards the spiritual freedom and moral perfection which he believed to be the ultimate goal of life.<sup>41</sup> Irresolute Burmov and Balabanov were dropped, and Todor Ikononov was brought in as minister of the interior. His reputation as an honest administrator was irreproachable, and it was due largely to his presence that the elections were quiet and lawful.<sup>42</sup> Kliment, Nachevich and Grekov were the leading figures in the cabinet, and Stambolov referred to them as "The Holy Trinity," although he admitted that he did not know ". . . which one is the Father, which the Son and which the Holy Ghost."<sup>43</sup> On the whole there can be no doubt but that Battenberg was honestly trying to make the electoral system work, although he himself was sceptical as to the outcome. In this connection it is interesting to note that the program of the Kliment ministry proclaimed its intention to maintain the constitution unchanged and to protect the rights both of the prince and of the assembly.<sup>44</sup>

In preparing for the elections, the Conservatives made some effort to warn opinion abroad of a possible suspension of the constitution. An Englishman by the name of Farley, an authority on Balkan affairs, was hired to write a pamphlet in which the constitution was described as quite un-

<sup>41</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 27; Manja Stojanow, *Die kirchenpolitische Tätigkeit des Metropoliten Kliment von Tyrnovo* (Sofia, 1931), 25-27.

<sup>42</sup> Ivan Todorov, *Todor Ikononov i deñnostta mu v sluzhene na búlgarskiya narod* [Todor Ikononov and his activity in the service of the Bulgarian people] (Sofia, 1921), 106-108.

<sup>43</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 126.

<sup>44</sup> Spiridion Gopčević, *Bulgarien und Ostrumelien mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Zeitraumes von 1878-1886* (Leipzig, 1886), 180.

suitable for the Bulgarian people. The intention of the pamphlet had apparently been to win over Gladstone for the support of an amended constitution. The prince was therefore chagrined when Gladstone came out with a statement favoring the maintenance of the constitution without alterations.<sup>45</sup> The Liberals, on their part, continued their electoral campaign with renewed vigor, confident that the people would not desert them. Nachevich himself admitted that the Liberals would probably win, but insisted that their popularity was due to their dishonest tactics of ". . . proclaiming to the people that their advent to power would be signalized by the abolition of all taxation. . . ."<sup>46</sup> Lacking the official support which the Conservatives received, their opponents were forced to rely largely on their own efforts. One of their chief foreign advisers was the French engineer Bianconi, who served as their expert on technical matters.<sup>47</sup>

The elections were held on January 13/25, 1880, under the same law as the elections of the previous October. The Liberals were given complete freedom in their campaigning, and the issues at stake should have aroused great interest on the part of the electors, but again the participation on the part of the people was comparatively slight. It does not appear that Battenberg ever used this argument in asking for the right to amend the constitution, but he would certainly have been justified in pointing to the lack of interest in the elections as a sign of political immaturity. This time, again, only 32 per cent of those eligible to vote cast their ballots, and the proportion in Sofia and Tirnovo was

<sup>45</sup> James Lewis Farley, *New Bulgaria* (London, 1880); Gopčević *op. cit.*, 182; Koch, *op. cit.*, 82-83; for Farley's career see "Farley, James Lewis," *Dictionary of National Biography*, XVIII, 209; and W. N. M., "Farley, James Lewis," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, VIII (1930-31), 42.

<sup>46</sup> Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/3117, No. 2, Sofia, January 7, 1880.

<sup>47</sup> F. Bianconi, "La verité sur la crise bulgare," *Revue française de l'étranger et des colonies*, V (1887), 325-326.

as low as 21 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively. Less than one-third of the deputies were able to get the required one-fourth of the votes on the first day of the election, and 72 per cent were not elected until the supplementary election held one week later. As a result, one-quarter of the members of the assembly were elected by less than 10 per cent of those eligible to vote in their electoral districts, and almost a half by less than 20 per cent. This compared very unfavorably with France and Belgium where approximately 80 per cent of the voters participated in the elections in the period of 1875-1880, and with Germany and Italy where 60 per cent took part. Of the members of this assembly, about one-half had participated in the previous assembly.<sup>48</sup>

As most people had predicted, the Liberals again won by a large majority,<sup>49</sup> and they now felt confident that the prince would have to give in to them when the assembly met in April. Battenberg, for his part, was still determined to remove the constitutional restrictions to his power, although he had reason to believe that this would not be as easy as the tone of the emperor's recent letter had implied. Throughout his first year in Bulgaria, the prince encountered the resolute opposition of his minister of war, General Parensov, who represented the active policy in the Balkans which was supported in Russia by Milyutin and Dondukov-Korsakov. To Parensov, it was a simple question of the interests of Russia against those of Austria, and it was his belief that the maintenance of the constitution was of importance to his country. When Nachevich and Grekov came to him with a proposal that he lend his aid to a suspension of the constitution, he did not hesitate to make his position clear. ". . . I am by no means a republican," he answered, "but neither am I a partner of arbitrary govern-

<sup>48</sup> Sarafov, *loc. cit.*, IV (1885), 34-35, 42-47, 56-57.

<sup>49</sup> Milyukov, *op. cit.*, 146.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

ment, and . . . the concentration of the power in the hands of the prince, who is young, inexperienced, inclined towards German methods, and strongly under the influence of the Austrian Count Khevenhüller, would be disastrous for the young Slavic state."<sup>50</sup>

Aside from the question of the prince's title, the chief source of friction between Battenberg and Parensov was the control of the army. Milyutin was very eager to see the Bulgarian army ready for action at the earliest possible moment, and to this end Parensov had been given wide powers. Battenberg felt this to be an encroachment upon his own field of activity. Not only did the constitution provide that "The prince is commander-in-chief of all the military forces of the principality alike in time of peace and in time of war,"<sup>51</sup> but his own training had made the prince particularly interested in matters of military organization. In questions of military tactics and discipline, he considered the Prussian methods far superior to the Russian, and one of his favorite plans was the introduction of a large number of German officers into the army. Over five hundred German officers applied for admission to the Bulgarian army between October 1879 and March 1880, some of them with personal recommendations from Prince Battenberg. To Parensov, who turned down all the applications, there was no greater danger to Russian interests than that they should lose control of the army for, as he once blurted out to Battenberg, he was training it for the purpose of winning a greater Bulgaria.<sup>52</sup> In addition to this, Parensov objected to Prince Alexander's request that the troops be used to put an end to any trouble that might arise when the assembly was dissolved. By the time of the elections for the second assembly, the breach between the

<sup>50</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1906), 326.

<sup>51</sup> Article 11.

<sup>52</sup> Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CXXXII (1907), 613.



## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

two men had become so wide that cabinet meetings were held without Parensov's being notified.<sup>53</sup>

Battenberg now saw his position seriously threatened both in the government and in the army. He could no longer withhold the right of the Liberals to form a government when the assembly met in April, nor could he wrest the control of the army from Parensov without further support from Russia. His position was further weakened in January when Davydov, who had supported him all along, was recalled. Rumor had it that this was the work of Parensov.<sup>54</sup> Prince Alexander now placed all of his hopes on his visit to St. Petersburg for the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of Alexander II's reign. He told the Austrian consul that unless he was given a free hand in Bulgaria, he would not return. But Count Khevenhüller could not see that it made much difference what powers the prince had, as long as the Russians were able to exercise so much influence through their control of the bureaucracy. Moreover, he doubted whether Battenberg would actually make good his intentions, and fully expected him to return empty-handed and gradually reconcile himself to being a Russian viceroy.<sup>55</sup>

As to precisely what changes in the constitution Battenberg was planning to ask for, the accounts vary. It is certain, however, that he desired a limitation of the freedom of assembly and of the press, a great reduction both in the size and in the powers of the National Assembly, part of whose membership was to be appointed, and the creation of a council of state. He was also intent on obtaining the recall of Parensov, and the right to dismiss any Russian

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, CXXVI (1906), 63-66, 328; CXXXII (1907), 603-619.

<sup>54</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 39; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 1, Sofia, January 7, 1880.

<sup>55</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 2, Sofia, January 14, 1880; No. 3, Sofia, January 21, 1880.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

officials from the country on twenty-four hours' notice.<sup>56</sup> Battenberg's success depended a great deal on the extent to which he could identify himself with Russian interests, and it was for this reason that he particularly regretted the loss of his strong supporter Davydov. He now relied chiefly on his personal plea to the emperor, for that appeared to be the only way left open to him. In December he had sent Colonel Shepelev to Alexander II as a personal emissary. His mission was to discover how far the prince would be able to go in the use of force in case of an uprising, and to impress the emperor with the seriousness of the prince's position. Shepelev returned in January without a favorable answer from his master, and gave the impression that the Russians were trying to deny all responsibility for the constitution.<sup>57</sup>

One source of opposition to Battenberg was removed with the departure of Palgrave, who had been so active in support of the Liberals. His successor, Ashburnham, did not differ greatly from his Austrian colleague in his views. "Until such a time as a governing class is formed in Bulgaria," he reported, "and the people are taught to respect the principle of authority, a strong and firm government is absolutely necessary."<sup>58</sup> He attributed the troubles in Bulgaria to three factors: the absence of experienced politicians, the financial problems resulting from the Treaty of Berlin, and the traditional disrespect for authority which was the result of the Turkish rule. But even taking these things into consideration, Bulgaria had not done very well by herself. "The fact remains," he continued, "after mak-

<sup>56</sup> Hans Klaeber, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien. Ein Lebensbild* (Dresden, 1905), 84-86; Koch, *op. cit.*, 71; Corti, *Battenberg*, 81; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 2, Sofia, January 14, 1880.

<sup>57</sup> Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 228, Sofia, December 2, 1879; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 3, Sofia, January 21, 1880.

<sup>58</sup> Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/3117, No. 22, Sofia, February 3, 1880; for Palgrave's removal, see above, 154, note 42.

### *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

ing all possible allowances, that Bulgaria has not, as yet, shown any great desire to prove herself worthy of the newly acquired liberties, or that all the blood and money spent in her cause have not been wasted."<sup>59</sup>

Prince Alexander left Bulgaria early in February, leaving Bishop Kliment as his substitute for the duration of his absence.<sup>60</sup> General Parensov claims that he was offered this position first, and that he turned it down because he was convinced that the prince would suspend the constitution as soon as he returned.<sup>61</sup> The difficulty of Battenberg's mission to Russia was vastly increased by the explosion in the Winter Palace on March 2, which cast a pall of gloom over the jubilee celebrations. In spite of the many troubles which were preoccupying him at this time, the emperor gave special attention to the prince's petition. A meeting was called at which both points of view with regard to Russian policy were represented, and Milyutin was given an opportunity to state his case. To him, as to the other nationalists, any increase in the prince's personal power meant a proportional decrease in Russia's influence in Bulgaria. The constitution, he argued, had not yet been tried and there was no reason to assume that the Liberals would not be able to make it work. He therefore recommended that the Liberals be given a fair trial. This point of view was quite in keeping with the emperor's letter of December 16/28, and Alexander II now accepted Milyutin's advice. But while the passive policy of Giers and Davydov thus met with temporary defeat, the Russian decision was not of a permanent nature. As in the emperor's letter of December 1879, here again was the implication that the experiment with the Liberals was to be a final attempt to make the constitution work. The prince's demand

<sup>59</sup> Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/3117, No. 42, Sofia, March 14, 1880.

<sup>60</sup> A procedure required under Article 19 of the constitution.

<sup>61</sup> Parensov, *op. cit.*, CXXXIII (1908), 263-265.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

that he be given wide powers was granted on principle, the only condition being that he give the Liberals one opportunity.<sup>62</sup>

Prince Alexander was thus able to return to Bulgaria in March with the knowledge that, in the last analysis, he would be able to suspend the constitution without Russian opposition. He also had obtained the important concession of the withdrawal of General Parensov as minister of war and the appointment in his place of General Ehrenroth, a Finn. The impressions which the prince brought back from Russia were of the worst. His opinion of the Russian government had never been high, and the fear and the lack of direction and self-confidence of which he found evidences on every side made him very pessimistic as to the extent to which he would be able to rely on Russia in the future.<sup>63</sup> To what extent these impressions influenced his policy it is difficult to say. It would be reasonable to assume that the Russian signs of weakness would have led him to seek closer relations with Austria-Hungary, a country which had consistently supported his point of view in Bulgaria and with which he would probably have had little trouble in getting along. But there is no evidence that he made any moves in this direction, although his personal relations with the Austrians were always of the best.<sup>64</sup>

Returning to Bulgaria in March, Battenberg was reconciled to letting the Liberals have their chance, but he was not optimistic as to the results. His dealings with the opposition had led him to realize that as politicians they were no less competent than the Conservatives, and he became all the more convinced that it was the system that was at

<sup>62</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 81; Klaeber, *op. cit.*, 84-86; Koch, *op. cit.*, 39; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 232-234.

<sup>63</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 82-83; Konstantin Irechek, *Bŭlgarski dnevnik, 30 oktombrii 1879—26 oktombrii 1884 g.* [Bulgarian diary, October 30, 1879—October 26, 1884] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1930-32), I, 130.

<sup>64</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 324.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

fault. "It is impossible," he told Count Kálnoky in St. Petersburg, "to rule with the absurd Bulgarian constitution, for it makes no difference whether the Conservative or the Liberal party is in power, as both are equally democratic and unreliable."<sup>65</sup> The Liberals, once they were in power, would soon get into all sorts of trouble, and he would then be free to suspend the constitution.<sup>66</sup>

### THE LIBERALS IN POWER

THE Liberal ministry was formed on March 24/April 5, 1880, the day after the second National Assembly opened. At its head was Dragan Tsankov, who was somewhat opportunistic in his political views and who was the only Liberal leader who could be counted on to coöperate successfully with the party members, the prince and the representatives of the foreign powers. He was willing to compromise with Battenberg on certain points, and took the initiative in using the title "Highness," thus burying once and for all the trivial controversy. The other mainstay of the new cabinet was Petko Karavelov, who was really the leader of the party in the assembly, but who did not as yet possess the full confidence of the prince. As minister of finance, however, he soon had the opportunity to demonstrate his abilities. Their colleagues in the cabinet were less well known, and were not destined to make any record for themselves. Georgi Tishev, Ivan Gyuzelev and Hristo Stoyanov, heading the ministries of interior, education and justice, were names which carried little weight. The presidency of the National Assembly, which was in fact a position almost equal to a cabinet post, was held by Petko R. Slaveïkov. This Liberal ministry was faced with the difficult problem of proving that the constitution which they had elaborated

<sup>65</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 84.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 82; Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 16, Sofia, April 7, 1880.

at Tirnovo was capable of being applied. While in the opposition they had been quick to point out the slightest fault of the Conservatives. It was now their problem to use the powers granted to them under the constitution in the creative work of drawing up the fundamental legislation for the country.<sup>67</sup>

The Conservatives did not bow to the inevitable; they immediately began to lay plans for the overthrow of the Liberals. Their main objective was to force Tsankov to resign, for they felt that Karavelov had made so many enemies that he would not be able to go very far alone.<sup>68</sup> The nationalism of the Liberals was a sign of danger which their opponents could always use when dealing with Austria, and it was probably at the instigation of Stoilov that the *Neue Freie Presse* published an article warning of the dangers of a Liberal ministry: "The Liberal Party must in fact be called Panbulgarian. Its program is the Treaty of San Stefano. . . . It therefore threatens the peace in the East; it is restless, and if it seizes the reins of government it will endanger the tranquillity of Europe."<sup>69</sup>

If the Viennese public was alarmed by this warning, its government was better informed. Khevenhüller had kept his eye on the Liberals and in March had reported that they promised to abide by the Treaty of Berlin and were, in fact, quite modest in their plans.<sup>70</sup> Tsankov he discovered to be attached to the constitution and determined not to serve as a tool of Russia. But from the Austrian point of view Tsankov's intentions could make little difference, as his administrative ability was limited and in any case the

<sup>67</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 185-186, 190; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 133; Koch, *op. cit.*, 43-48.

<sup>68</sup> A. G. Drandar, *Cinq ans de règne. Le prince Alexandre de Battenberg en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1884), 58-59; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 229.

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 191.

<sup>70</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 11, Sofia, March 3, 1880.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

influence of Russia in Bulgaria was still overwhelming.<sup>71</sup>

Ehrenroth, the new minister of war, stood out in sharp contrast to his predecessor, Parensov. He was a quiet and thorough military administrator who kept entirely out of politics and devoted himself to the training and organization of the army. As a Finn, he was accustomed to the methods of constitutional government and was successful in cooperating both with the prince and with the assembly. If he can be said to have had any bias with regard to the constitutional issues of the day, it was the natural preference of an administrator for order and efficiency as opposed to the delays which sometimes occurred in the assembly.<sup>72</sup> The aggressive and nationalist aspect of Russian policy was now represented by Kumani, who succeeded Davydov as consul. He maintained very close relations with the Liberals, and identified them with the cause of Russian prestige in Bulgaria. Thus the conflict between the two Russian policies was continued in the persons of Ehrenroth and Kumani.<sup>73</sup>

The chief method which Kumani expected to use to promote Russian influence in Bulgaria, aside from his support of the Liberals and their Tirnovo Constitution, was economic penetration. To this end, he gave his active support to the schemes of N. I. Utin, who represented the interests of the Russian banker Polyakov and the contractor Ginsburg. Under the Conservative ministry, Utin had met with no success in his plans for a national bank, which would have placed Bulgarian finance under the control of Euro-

<sup>71</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 13, Sofia, March 17, 1880.

<sup>72</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 19, Sofia, May 1, 1880; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 10, Sofia, May 5, 1881; Koch, *op. cit.*, 41-42.

<sup>73</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 194; A. F. Golowine, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien (1879-1886)* (Wien, 1896), 134-135; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 58; *Russie et Bulgarie: Les causes occultes de la question bulgare* (Paris, 1887), 23-24; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 9, Sofia, April 21, 1881.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

pean bankers, and his project for a railroad from Ruschuk to Sofia met with an equally cold reception. To the Russian nationalists, this was only one more proof that the prince and the Conservatives were enemies of Russia. The advent of the Liberal government and its close relations with Kumani now gave new hope to Utin.<sup>74</sup>

But the representative of Russian finance was soon to discover that Liberals were no less firm than their opponents in refusing to permit the expansion of Russian economic influence in Bulgaria. Under the Treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria was under obligation to take over from Turkey the financial obligations both for the Vienna-Constantinople railroad, under construction by Baron Hirsch, and for the Ruschuk-Varna railroad, which had been constructed by an English company in 1867 and for which the Turkish government had not been able to make the annual payments for a number of years. Tsankov was now placed in the difficult position of relying largely on the Russians for political support and at the same time facing the legitimate demand of the Austrians for an early settlement of their claims. After pursuing tactics of delay for several months, he was finally forced to give in to the Austrians, and a conference was called in Vienna in the summer of 1880 to draw up the program for the completion of the Vienna-Constantinople line.<sup>75</sup>

From the point of view of Bulgarian constitutional development, the importance of the Russian plans for economic penetration lies in the fact that their failure was attributed largely to the influence of Battenberg and the

<sup>74</sup> *Russie et Bulgarie*, 9-29; Parensov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1906), 66-68; Golowine, *op. cit.*, 135.

<sup>75</sup> *Dnevništvo na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya* [Minutes of the third regular National Assembly. Second session] (3 vols.; Sofia, 1883-84), I, 160-161; Radoslave M. Dimtschoff, *Das Eisenbahnwesen auf der Balkan-Halbinsel* (Bamberg, 1894), 8-59; Iwan Karosseroff, *Zur Entwicklung der bulgarischen Eisenbahnen* (Erlangen, 1907), 63-74; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 217-222.



## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

Conservatives. This was true only with limitations. The prince was eager to see railroads built in Bulgaria, and it was natural that he should want to complete the line connecting Bulgaria with Western Europe. The fact that the Treaty of Berlin required its completion was only an additional argument in its favor. Prince Alexander was therefore indignant when the Russians insisted that their plans be given precedence over the legitimate demands of Austria, and he did in fact receive the approval of Alexander II for adhering to the Treaty of Berlin on this point.<sup>76</sup>

It is perhaps to Tsankov's credit that he was able to turn the wrath of the Russians against the prince and the Conservatives, when as a matter of fact the Liberals themselves were just as much opposed to the Russian plans. To a large extent, this was due to their opposition to all foreign encroachments on Bulgarian independence. But another important factor was the financial policy of Karavelov who, whatever his political ideas, was an ardent conservative in financial matters. In collecting taxes, which he did with great zeal, his principle was that the easiest taxes to administer were those to which the people were already accustomed. He therefore made no essential change in the tax system inherited from the Turks. He did not approve of spending money on aiding industry and agriculture or on railroads, but considered schools and roads as the first necessity. This view was due at least in part to the financial straits in which the country found itself, with a small revenue and with half the budget devoted to military expenditures.<sup>77</sup>

In the meantime Tsankov succeeded in discrediting his cabinet by committing a number of blunders. In the question of the church, he antagonized Russia by interfering in

<sup>76</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 89-90; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 222.

<sup>77</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 203, 204, n. 1; Ashburnham to Salisbury, F. O. 78/3117, No. 2, Sofia, January 7, 1880.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the affairs of the exarchate and by trying to use the church as a means for nationalist propaganda in Macedonia.<sup>78</sup> He also antagonized the prince by introducing into the National Assembly a bill for the creation of a national militia with elected officers and under the control of the civil officials in each province. This was a definite encroachment on the prince's constitutional rights, and Battenberg was able to veto the measure without serious difficulty.<sup>79</sup> The incident which finally led to Tsankov's resignation was his attempt to deceive the Austrian government during the negotiations connected with the setting up of the Danube subcommission provided for by the Treaty of Berlin. That one of his ministers should insult the Austrian government was more than Battenberg could stand for, and in spite of the opposition of the Russians he forced Tsankov's resignation.<sup>80</sup> This marks the first of a long series of cases in Bulgarian constitutional history when the minister-president resigned because of the prince's displeasure, and without losing the confidence of the assembly.

The new cabinet was formed on October 28/November 9, 1880, under the presidency of Karavelov, who kept his post as minister of finance and also took over the direction of the ministry of justice. Tsankov stayed on for almost two months as minister of the interior, and was then replaced by Slaveïkov. Tishev, Stoyanov and Gyuzelev were dropped, and Stoïchev and Sarafov joined the cabinet as ministers of foreign affairs and education, respectively. Karavelov was now in absolute control of the assembly, and no quarter was given to the opposition. Under Tsankov, the assembly had set the precedent of disqualifying various prominent members of the opposition on semi-

<sup>78</sup> O., M. and B., *Pogled vŭrhu dĕyatelnostta na bŭlgarskata ekzarhiya, 1877-1902 g.* [Review of the activity of the Bulgarian exarchate, 1877-1902] (Leipzig, 1902), 16-21.

<sup>79</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 50-51; Klæber, *op. cit.*, 91-92.

<sup>80</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 64-65; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 64-67; Gopĉević, *op. cit.*, 192-195.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

legal grounds, thus justifying the precautionary measures which Palgrave had drawn up in the autumn of 1879. By the time Karavelov took over control, the opposition rarely attempted to express its opinion, and the interpellation which they initiated on the occasion of his first appearance before the assembly was settled by a fist-fight.<sup>81</sup>

With this one exception, the Liberals conducted themselves very well in the assembly. The name of the prince was treated with respect, and several important items of legislation were passed which filled in some of the gaps in the constitution, such as the laws establishing the chamber of accounts and providing for the impeachment of ministers. But at the same time their unchallenged position provided no check on their ambitions, and they certainly violated the spirit of the constitution when, at the end of the regular autumn session of the National Assembly, they granted Karavelov extraordinary powers with the specific reservation that if he should be dismissed before the assembly met again these powers could not be passed on to his successor. An even more serious blow to the prince's position was embodied in the draft of a number of constitutional amendments published in the official party paper, the *Nezavisimost* (Independence). While this program was not published at Karavelov's initiative, he must certainly be held responsible for the apprehensions which it aroused. It was proposed that the prince should be shorn of all his powers, and that the ministers be elected by the assembly. The National Assembly was to meet at fixed sessions, and the Grand National Assembly would meet every three or five years to consider constitutional amendments. This was a direct challenge to the prince's prerogatives, and the

<sup>81</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 17, No. 43, Sofia, December 14, 1880; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 235-242.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

prince could see no way to defend himself within the framework of the constitution.<sup>82</sup>

By the Conservatives, the Liberals could only be described in such terms as nihilists, terrorists and Jacobins. Their main attacks on the government were conducted in the *Bŭlgarski glas* (Voice of Bulgaria), edited by Nachevich. The extraordinary powers granted to Karavelov were denounced as an open violation of the constitution, and a number of cases were cited where the constitutional immunity of person and of dwelling had been disregarded.<sup>83</sup> In contrast to this, their own program was beyond reproach: "First, absolute respect for the word and spirit of the Bulgarian constitution and its sincere application; second, absolute respect for the spirit and word of the existing laws; and third, the gradual organization of all branches of government on the basis of the principles laid down by the constitution."<sup>84</sup> Particularly effective was their denunciation of the radical views and questionable past of the Liberal leaders, and it is interesting to note that the term "nihilist" was already being used with the incorrect connotation of "terrorist" which has since become so common. The following, for instance, is an attack on the three leading Liberals with especial reference to their conduct during the Constitutional Assembly:

"The leaders of this party were Karavelov, Tsankov and Slaveïkov. Karavelov is an avowed nihilist, that is to say a member of that sect which desires the destruction of society. Is it possible for such a man to tolerate a constitution which, on the contrary, is the very bulwark of society? Tsankov is a former Turkish civil servant, a person who was born and brought up in the midst of illegality itself, in

<sup>82</sup> Milyukov, *op. cit.*, 49-53; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 243-247, 253.

<sup>83</sup> *Bŭlgarski glas*, II, No. 1 (December 18/30, 1880), 1; II, No. 7 (January 11/23, 1881), 2.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, II, No. 17 (February 15/27, 1881), 1.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

the midst of Turkish anarchy. Is it possible for such a person to tolerate a constitution which is the basis of law and order? Slaveïkov is the very personification of disorder, he is a man who does not know the meaning of law and order, and is it therefore strange that he should have tried to overthrow the assembly for the purpose of preventing the establishment of law and order in Bulgaria?"<sup>85</sup>

It is interesting to see the Conservatives defending the constitution which they had for so long attacked in vain, and it is a credit to their skill as propagandists that, after the assassination of Alexander II, they took great pains to identify the Liberals with the forces of unrest in Russia.<sup>86</sup>

Throughout the duration of these two Liberal cabinets, Battenberg was very much dissatisfied with the way things were going, and the death of his aunt, Empress Marie, during the summer, left him greatly discouraged with regard to the continuance of Russian support. In December 1880, the Austrian agent reported that the prince was ". . . plunged in a state of complete prostration . . .," and that he saw no hope left for the country. He had never had any confidence in his advisers, and now he had lost confidence in himself.<sup>87</sup> The necessity of letting Karavelov become minister-president in October 1880 he found particularly humiliating, as he had always regarded the Liberal leader as the chief opponent of his constitutional prerogatives. A month after Karavelov came to power, the prince informed the British agent that he ". . . still regarded his position as Prince of Bulgaria in the light of an experiment and if it failed he should be prepared to resign." Yet although he disliked Karavelov personally, he had to admit that he was a competent minister:

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, II, No. 18 (February 19/March 3, 1881), 1.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, II, No. 23 (March 8/20, 1881), 1.

<sup>87</sup> Khevenhüller to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 17, No. 43, Sofia, December 14, 1880; Corti, *Battenberg*, 101.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

“ . . . Mr. Karaveloff . . . was a man of great intelligence and had undoubtedly considerable influence and authority in the country. As a constitutional sovereign His Highness preferred to have a minister like Mr. Karaveloff than any of his former ministers who, although more agreeable to himself personally, had not the authority necessary to govern the country. His Highness admitted that he learned more from Mr. Karaveloff, who had a clear and lucid manner in explaining the difficult questions with which he had to deal, than from any other of his Ministers.”<sup>88</sup>

But in spite of his recognition of Karavelov's abilities, Prince Alexander could not overlook the fact that his personal prestige in the country was steadily declining at the expense of that of the assembly. Not only was this the case, but he also felt strongly that the great parliamentary majority on which the power of the Liberals rested did not represent the will of the people. His travels about the country had convinced him that the people had no confidence in their ministers, for they always turned to the prince personally for aid. The common people with whom he came into contact showed no understanding of constitutional issues. The conclusion he reached, therefore, was that the Liberals were a subversive group of intriguers who were more skillful in creating trouble than in keeping order. He saw no reason why he should be restrained any longer by the regulations set up by the Bulgarian and Russian nationalists at Tirnovo.<sup>89</sup>

It is not easy for the impartial observer to evaluate the regime of the Liberal Party which had been the sponsor of constitutional government at Tirnovo. M. V. Chirol, who went to Bulgaria in 1881 as correspondent for the *Daily news*, published an article in the *Fortnightly review* shortly thereafter in which he praised the Liberal regime in the

<sup>88</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3119, No. 179, Sofia, December 11, 1880.

<sup>89</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 69-71.

## *The Struggle Between Prince and Assembly*

highest terms, citing figures and facts to prove that the country had progressed rapidly under its administration. But as soon as he set eyes on this article, Frank C. Lascelles, the British agent in Sofia, sent a long report to Lord Granville refuting Chirol's arguments point by point and leaving the impression that there was little to be said in favor of the Liberals.<sup>90</sup>

Without entering into this controversy, it is possible to point out several factors which influenced the course of constitutional government in Bulgaria during this period. The lack of political experience and traditions both on the part of the leaders and on the part of the people is a fact which is frequently stressed and which undoubtedly accounts for a great deal of the trouble. Of deeper significance is the fact that for the people at large there was only one party in Bulgaria, that of the Liberals, who had so skillfully identified themselves both with the past traditions of the literate Bulgarians and with their future aspirations that their control of public opinion was complete. The importance of this situation lies in the fact that it made virtually impossible the existence of a two-party system which is so necessary for the proper functioning of a parliamentary regime. The rival interests of the European powers added a further complication such as would have endangered the life of the healthiest political structure. And finally, the personality and training of the prince himself were not conducive to the successful coöperation of his powers with those of the assembly. Constitutional government in Bulgaria was thus in a precarious state when the news arrived of the assassination of Emperor Alexander II.

<sup>90</sup> M. Valentine Chirol, "Bulgaria," *Fortnightly review*, XXXVI (1881), 284-293; refuted in Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3310, No. 149, Sofia, October 19, 1881.

## CHAPTER VIII. THE SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION 1881-1883

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### THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF MAY 1881

**T**HE assassination of Alexander II in March 1881 did not result in any sudden change in the policy of the Russian government with regard to Bulgaria. It did, however, give rise to some fears that Russia would no longer be willing to play such an active part in Bulgarian affairs. Leaving immediately for Russia to attend the late emperor's funeral, the prince resolved to take this opportunity to make one more appeal to the Russians for their support in his attempt to prevent the assembly from getting complete control of the country. In spite of the internal difficulties with which Alexander III was faced at the time, a conference was arranged and Battenberg presented his case. While no detailed account of the conversations is available, the most authoritative reports agree that the prince did not receive specific permission to violate the constitution. While both the emperor and Giers agreed that that document left much to be desired, they hoped that Battenberg would be able to solve the problem without creating unnecessary trouble. As Giers said in his instructions to the new Russian agent, shortly after, "Any attempt to change the state of affairs as they exist at present in Bulgaria through a constitutional reform should be made with extreme prudence and by legal means."<sup>1</sup> Having heard of no change in the Bulgarian situation during the course of

<sup>1</sup> Giers to Hitrovo, April 8/20, 1881, quoted in S. Skazkin, *Konets avstro-russko-germanskogo soyuza* [The end of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance] (Vol. I; Moscow, 1928), I, 239; E. C. Corti, *Alexander von Battenberg. Sein Kampf mit den Zaren und Bismarck* (Wien, 1920), 108-109.



## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

the winter, the advice given by Alexander III did not differ from that of his father.<sup>2</sup>

Battenberg's desire to alter the provisions of the Tirnovo Constitution had often been expressed, and the events of the past two years had confirmed his original belief that the only hope for a firm and responsible government lay in a basic reform. That this desire should have taken the form of decisive action in the spring of 1881 was due to three factors: the situation in Russia, the increasing strength of the Liberals and the strong personal support of General Ehrenroth. It is true that the prince did not receive specific permission to suspend the constitution when he went to St. Petersburg, yet the strong antipathy of the new emperor for all forms of liberalism and his great preoccupation with the crisis in Russia made it clear to Battenberg that decisive action on his part would not meet with an unfavorable reception in Russia.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, the Liberals were beginning to resemble more and more the elements of unrest in Russia. Their aggressive spirit had not been diminished by the responsibilities of government, and there seemed to be no possibility of limiting their power by legal means. In February, the prince informed the British agent ". . . that he foresaw that a conflict would probably take place between himself and the Chamber during the next session, in which he could not expect any support from his Ministers, and his hands were completely tied by the Constitution which gave so much power to the Chamber." He was moreover resolved, should

<sup>2</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 241-242; A. G. Drandar, *Cinq ans de règne. Le prince Alexandre de Battenberg en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1884), 72-73; Hans Klaeber, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien. Ein Lebensbild* (Dresden, 1904), 98-100; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 18, No. 7, Sofia, March 24, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> P. A. Matvëev, *Bolgariya posle Berlinskago Kongressa. Istoricheskii ocherk* [Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin. A historical sketch] (St. Petersburg, 1887), 81-83; Adolf Koch, *Fürst Alexander von Bulgarien. Mittheilungen aus seinem Leben und seiner Regierung nach persönlichen Erinnerungen* (Darmstadt, 1887), 72-74.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the crisis become serious, "... to convoke the great National Assembly and declare to them that unless the Constitution were modified he should place his resignation in their hands and leave the country."<sup>4</sup>

Before leaving for Russia to attend his uncle's funeral, Battenberg gave proof of his lack of confidence in Karavelov by leaving the whole cabinet in charge of affairs during his absence instead of the minister-president alone, as he had done during Kliment's ministry.<sup>5</sup> Under these circumstances Battenberg could not have been surprised when, on his return from Russia, he learned from his war minister that Karavelov had attended a banquet at which the assassins of Alexander II had been toasted as heroes and martyrs.<sup>6</sup> The prince felt that he could no longer delay his decision: he must either take the initiative himself, or see the last opportunity for the restoration of his prestige disappear.

But it was only the active support of General Ehrenroth, his minister of war, that made it possible for Prince Alexander to take the initiative. For some ten months after his arrival, the Finnish general had avoided all meddling in politics and had devoted himself entirely to the organization of the army. By December 1880, however, he had become disgusted with the inertia with which all of the measures which he recommended were met in the cabinet and in the assembly. To him, the Liberal cabinet seemed more

<sup>4</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3308, No. 11, Sofia, February 10, 1881.

<sup>5</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3308, No. 19, Sofia, March 14, 1881; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 7, Sofia, March 24, 1881.

<sup>6</sup> Spiridion Gopčević, *Bulgarien und Ostrumelien mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Zeitraumes von 1878-1886* (Leipzig, 1886), 197; Koch, *op. cit.*, 87-88; Klæber, *op. cit.*, 101; and Corti, *Battenberg*, 109; there also appears to have been an article published in the Ruschuk *Rabotnik* [Worker], No. 14 (March 1/13, 1881), noting with approval the assassination of the emperor, cited in D. Marinov, *Stefan Stambolov i nověšhata ni istoriya (Lětopisni spomeni i ocherki)* [Stefan Stambolov and our recent history (Chronological memoirs and sketches)] (Sofia, 1909), 157.

### *The Suspension of the Constitution*

like a committee of public safety, which did not think it necessary to pay any attention to proposals coming from outside its own group. Ehrenroth became profoundly dissatisfied with this method of conducting business and, according to the account of the Austrian agent, he presented the prince with an ultimatum upon the latter's return from St. Petersburg: unless a change were made in the constitution, he would resign his position.<sup>7</sup>

The resignation of the war minister would have meant the end of the prince's prestige, for he was the only prominent official upon whom he could rely for support. It was thus natural that Battenberg should have lent a willing ear to Ehrenroth's proposal for a *coup d'état* which would involve the appointment of a new cabinet under the war minister, the calling of the Grand National Assembly and the presentation to it of certain constitutional amendments which were regarded as indispensable to the continuation of Battenberg's reign. It was in this form that Ehrenroth discussed his plan with Kumani, the Russian agent who was on the point of leaving Bulgaria. The general informed him that he intended to make the proposal to the prince as soon as he returned from Russia, but agreed with Kumani that no action should be taken before obtaining the coöperation of his successor, Hitrovo, who had not yet arrived. Kumani therefore did not report the matter to his government at the time, assuming that the question would be taken up with Hitrovo.<sup>8</sup>

It was under these circumstances that Battenberg finally decided upon a course of action which marked a sharp break with the past. On April 27/May 9, 1881, he issued a proclamation which in substance put into effect the plan

<sup>7</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 10, Sofia, May 5, 1881.

<sup>8</sup> Kumani to Giers, Vienna, April 26/May 8, 1881, and April 28/May 10, 1881, quoted in Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 240; K. G. Ehrenroth's testimony in "K novějšej istorii Bolgarii" [On the recent history of Bulgaria], *Russkaya starina*, LII (1886), 477.

elaborated by his minister of war. He admitted that the oath which he had taken two years earlier bound him to support the constitution. But it also bound him to look after the happiness and welfare of his country. He had therefore decided to make use of his constitutional prerogative of convoking the Grand National Assembly in order to place the fate of the nation and of his crown in its hands. In the meantime, General Ehrenroth was to serve as minister-president.<sup>9</sup> This proclamation was supplemented two weeks later by an announcement, in the form of a letter from the prince to Ehrenroth, of three measures which the Grand National Assembly would have to accept if it desired to see Battenberg remain on the throne. The prince was to be given extraordinary powers for a period of seven years during which he would be free to set up a council of state and make whatever other changes he thought necessary. The national assembly would not meet at its regular session during the current year, and the budget of the previous year would be held over. Finally, the prince would convoke the Grand National Assembly again at the end of the seven-year period for the purpose of amending the constitution in the light of the experience acquired in the interim.<sup>10</sup>

The fate of Battenberg's *coup d'état* of May 9 depended to a great extent on the reception which it received in St. Petersburg, for it is now clear that neither the prince nor Ehrenroth had informed the Russian government of their plans.<sup>11</sup> That the prince realized he was taking a certain

<sup>9</sup> *Dürzhaven věstnik* [State gazette], III, No. 26 (April 29/May 11, 1881), 201.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted, *ibid.*, 90-91.

<sup>11</sup> The documents from the archives of the Russian ministry of foreign affairs, quoted in Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 238, reveal quite clearly that the prince's *coup d'état* did not receive the previous consent of the Russian government; the contrary view, which was maintained by M. N. Pokrovskii, *Diplomatiya i voyni tsarskoj Rossii v XIX stoletii* [The diplomacy and wars of imperial Russia in the nineteenth century] (Moscow, 1923), 346, is thus shown to have been incorrect.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

risk is shown by the fact that the announcement of his intentions was made between the departure of Kumani and the arrival of his successor. Battenberg had been shown Hitrovo's instructions, and he knew that the new agent would not be able to coöperate in the plans without receiving specific permission from his superiors—permission which the prince feared might not be forthcoming, partly because Bulgaria had shown no signs of disturbance which would justify a *coup* in Russian eyes, and partly because the internal situation in Russia was such as to make the authorities wary of anything which might lead to further trouble. Battenberg was thus taking a considerable risk when he announced his intention of convoking the Grand National Assembly.<sup>12</sup>

As soon as the news of Battenberg's *coup d'état* reached Russia, the differences between the two points of view which had characterized Russian policy since the Treaty of Berlin became more conspicuous than ever. Milyutin felt that Russia would make a grave mistake if she permitted the German prince to get extraordinary powers, whereas Giers could see no harm in it so long as Germany and Austria-Hungary did not take offence. The former view received its support in a detailed despatch from Colonel Shepelev, who was now stationed in Vienna. It was Shepelev's view that if Russia supported the prince, it would almost certainly mean the end of her influence in Bulgaria. If the assembly accepted Battenberg's proposals, the country would either come under the influence of the Austrians or else the Russian and Bulgarian civil servants would become engaged in a perpetual struggle for power. If, on the other hand, the assembly rejected the request for extraordinary powers, the Bulgarian problem would be opened to the intervention of the powers and then Russia could not

<sup>12</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 241-242.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

hope to maintain the position which she had been building up for two years. Shepelev therefore concluded that Russia should disassociate itself from Ehrenroth's initiative.<sup>13</sup> With this point of view Milyutin was in complete agreement, and he transmitted Shepelev's report to Giers with a note of approval.<sup>14</sup>

But the foreign office took quite a different view of the matter. A great deal depended on the personal views of the emperor, and the support which Alexander III gave to the policy of his diplomats was an important factor in determining the Russian stand. The chief factor in Russian life at this time was the wide prevalence of the terrorist activity which had led to the assassination of Alexander II. The reign of the new emperor was characterized by an emphasis on the authority of the government, which succeeded in restoring order within Russia, and it was this principle of authority which was largely responsible for the emperor's approval of his cousin's activities in Bulgaria.<sup>15</sup> We are fortunate in having specific evidence of the emperor's views. Three days after the *coup* a report was received from Lishin, the acting Russian agent in Sofia, which described the Liberals as half-educated intellectuals who were able to maintain themselves in power through their propaganda in the press and in the school, although they had no roots in the country. In short, the Liberals were not unlike their dangerous counterparts in Russia. The Conservatives, Lishin continued, represented the propertied and responsible citizens whose chief aim was to see that law and order were maintained. After reading this report, the emperor noted: "A very clear picture and, I am convinced, a very

<sup>13</sup> Shepelev to Milyutin, Vienna, April 28/May 10, 1881, quoted, *ibid.*, I, 243; Elliot to Granville, *Parliamentary Papers*, XCVIII (1881), "Bulgaria, No. 1, Correspondence respecting the affairs of Bulgaria" (hereafter cited as P. P.), No. 7, Vienna, May 10, 1881.

<sup>14</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 243-244.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 242-243.

## The Suspension of the Constitution

accurate one.”<sup>16</sup> Again, learning that Bismarck sympathized with Battenberg’s difficult position, he wrote: “I likewise have always held that this was the only solution for the disgusting situation in which the prince found himself.”<sup>17</sup>

Alexander III appears to have ignored completely the arguments which had been successfully advanced during the past two years by Milyutin and which were now to be taken up by his successor, Obruchev. The idea that Russia could only maintain her influence in Bulgaria by allying herself with the nationalist forces in support of the Tirnovo Constitution and by building up the army with their coöperation was one which the emperor could not grasp. To him, the problem was that of a sincere and able monarch who was being balked in his efforts to rule the country by a group of irresponsible and dangerous intellectuals. He saw no reason why the Russian government should support the Liberals and, while he was surprised that he had not been informed of the *coup* ahead of time, he placed full confidence in the prince. It was thus largely the result of the emperor’s initiative that a manifesto was published two days after Battenberg’s *coup d’état* giving the young prince Russia’s full support.<sup>18</sup> Almost a month later, when the Liberal leaders telegraphed the emperor to ask for his aid, he refused to pay any attention to them. “I will not con-

<sup>16</sup> Lishin to Giers, Sofia, April 30/May 12, quoted, *ibid.*, I, 244.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 245.

<sup>18</sup> Reprinted from the St. Petersburg *Pravitel'stvenyi vĕstnik*, in the *Dürzhaven vĕstnik*, III, No. 36 (May 30/June 11, 1881), supplement; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 242, 246-248; P. Milyukov, *Bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya* [The Bulgarian constitution] (Salonica, 1905), 53; Hans Uebersberger, “Bulgarien und Russland,” *Vorträge der Gehe-Stiftung zu Dresden*, VIII (1917), 72-73; Pokrovskii, *op. cit.*, 348; the bitterness against Battenberg which resulted from the eventual failure of the Russian policy may be seen in S. S. Tatishchev, “Rossiya i Bolgariya. Istoricheskaya spravka” [Russia and Bulgaria. A historical inquiry] *Iz proshlago russkoĭ diplomatii* (St. Petersburg, 1890), 371-374, and in S. M. Goriainov, “Razryv Rossii s Bolgariĕ v 1886 godu” [The rupture between Russia and Bulgaria in 1886], *Istoricheskii vĕstnik*, CXLVII (1917), 174-175, who divide the responsibility between the prince and Giers.

sider any telegram from revolutionaries," he noted on the margin, "and these Liberals are nothing other than socialists. The Bulgarian people will, I am sure, support the prince—for these are only a band of rowdies and cowards."<sup>19</sup>

Once the Russian government had placed its stamp of approval upon Battenberg's *coup d'état*, Giers was faced with the twofold problem of keeping the situation in Bulgaria under control and of winning the support of the European powers for the prince. The solution for the former lay with the Russian agent, Hitrovo, who was now instructed "... to support Prince Alexander during the present crisis, but to avoid any initiative which might involve our responsibility."<sup>20</sup> This was a very difficult assignment for, whatever attitude the Russian government might take, in the eyes of the Bulgarian people the prince was merely carrying out Russian orders. As Hitrovo saw it, it was important that Russia should identify herself with this attempt to amend the constitution. He admitted that the Liberals had a wider popular support than did their opponents and also that they had been more successful in governing the country. What he feared was that the Liberals would be able to form an oligarchy of bureaucrats and thus deprive the prince of all his power. He objected to the suddenness of the *coup*, and the lack of preparation which had characterized its announcement, but he felt it was quite necessary and was thus able to give it his full support.<sup>21</sup>

It was left to Giers to win the support of the other powers. His plan was to obtain the agreement of the other signatories of the Treaty of Berlin to a joint note, to be published on the eve of the meeting of the Grand National Assembly, in which the powers would formally associate themselves with the prince's cause. Both Germany and

<sup>19</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 248.

<sup>20</sup> Giers to Hitrovo, May 7/19, 1881, *ibid.*, I, 249.

<sup>21</sup> Hitrovo to Giers, Sofia, July 31/August 12, 1881, *ibid.*, I, 251.



## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

Austria-Hungary greeted this idea with great favor, for this was one of the few questions on which the monarchs of the three empires were for the time being in complete agreement. To them it was an obvious issue of authority versus anarchy and, as soon as Alexander III took the initiative, the three allies sent their congratulations to the prince.<sup>22</sup>

The success of Giers' plan now depended largely on Great Britain. For over a month, Lord Granville kept the public in the dark with regard to his plans. In the House of Commons Sir Charles W. Dilke, the under secretary of state for foreign affairs, was forced to parry questions on a number of occasions with the answer that the government was not yet prepared to express its opinion.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, Frank C. Lascelles was keeping the government informed on the course of events in great detail, and in June the foreign secretary undertook to express the cautious opinion that ". . . whereas the Bulgarian Constitution was susceptible of improvement, . . ." he felt that Battenberg had gone too far in his demands and that a compromise should be sought.<sup>24</sup> A consultation with the French ambassador in London resulted in an agreement upon a common policy. England and France concurred with the three allies in their opinion that Prince Alexander was justified in attempting to ameliorate his position, but they felt that the measures which he had undertaken were extreme. They could therefore join in an agreement only "If the other

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 245-246; Elliot to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 7, Vienna, May 10, 1881; Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 4, Sofia, May 15, 1881; Theodor von Sosnosky, *Die Balkanpolitik Österreich-Ungarns seit 1866* (2 vols.; Stuttgart and Berlin, 1913-14), does not discuss this aspect of the Bulgarian problem.

<sup>23</sup> *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. Third Series*, CCLXI, 1322, 1654; CCLXII, 236-237, 467-468, 848.

<sup>24</sup> Granville to Elliot, P. P., XCVIII, No. 53, Foreign Office, June 20, 1881; a similar view was expressed by the *London Times*, No. 30,245 July 13, 1881), p. 11.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Powers were disposed to use their influence in recommending moderation in both parties. . . ."<sup>25</sup>

On June 21, before the precise policy had been decided upon, Lord Granville reviewed the Bulgarian situation before the House of Lords. He expressed the opinion that it was probably necessary to amend the constitution in such a way as to give more power to the executive, but he felt that Battenberg should be very cautious in going beyond a solution of compromise with the assembly. It was, after all, primarily a struggle between the executive and the legislative powers, and the former was certainly justified in demanding a change in the current state of affairs. For ". . . it appears to me," he continued, "that it would be madness on the part of a population lately emancipated, with little political experience . . . not to try to arrive at a friendly understanding with the Prince, and to agree to improvements and reforms which, while they did not sacrifice liberty, would also secure order and justice to all classes of the community."<sup>26</sup>

The question of a joint declaration of the powers continued to be the subject of considerable negotiation. With the backing of France and Italy, Great Britain agreed to an early Russian draft which was vague in tone but objected to a later one which recommended Battenberg's proposals unreservedly.<sup>27</sup> On the eve of the meeting of the assembly, when it was apparent that it would give in to Battenberg's demands, Giers no longer found it necessary to insist on a formal note. Instead, an oral address was delivered by von Thielau, the German agent and the *doyen* of the diplomatic corps, and even here several sentences were deleted at the demand of Lascelles.<sup>28</sup> The powers thus succeeded in main-

<sup>25</sup> Granville to Lyons, P. P., XCVIII, No. 56, Foreign Office, June 23, 1881.

<sup>26</sup> *Hansard*, CCLXII, 956-958.

<sup>27</sup> P. P., XCVIII, Nos. 67, 68, 72, 76, 80-89.

<sup>28</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 112, Svishtov, July 12, 1881; Saint-Vallier to Saint-Hilaire, *Documents diplomatiques français* (1871-

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

taining a common front, and contributed substantially to the prestige of the prince.

Within Bulgaria, Battenberg received the full support of the Conservatives. Their point of view is probably best expressed in a memoir in the French language prepared for the prince by Stoilov. It was his view that the Bulgarian people, while they had great natural ability, had evolved political habits during the Turkish rule which made the application of a democratic form of government very difficult. For several generations, the spirit of disregard for authority and revolt against the government had been emphasized. Even the exarchate had met with trouble in the 1870's. The type of government which should have been planned at Tirnovo was one which placed the executive in a particularly strong position. Instead, the prince was given powers similar to those of an honorary president of a republican regime. What Stoilov wanted was a strong, centralized administrative system with a carefully organized bureaucracy. A council of state would be in charge of the technical aspects of legislation, and the national assembly would be reduced in size to seventy members elected by an indirect system of voting. At the same time, the civil liberties granted by the Tirnovo Constitution would be greatly circumscribed and the emphasis would be shifted from the unfettered self-expression of the people to the careful planning of all phases of national life by the benevolent and paternalistic government.<sup>29</sup>

With all of this the Liberals were in violent disagreement. Their first reaction was to start a brisk campaign

1914), *ire série (1871-1900)*, (Paris, 1932), IV, No. 68, Berlin, July 17, 1881.

<sup>29</sup> Iv. P. Plachkov, *Dr. K. Stoilov (Zhivot i obshtestvena deinnost)* [Dr. K. Stoilov (Life and public career)] (Sofia, 1932), 16-25; this point of view is reflected in Lascelles' suggestion for an amendment to the constitution, Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 91, Sofia, June 30, 1881, and in George Washburn, "What is the trouble in Bulgaria?" *The independent*, XXXIII, No. 1698 (June 16, 1881), 3.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

against the prince and his proposals. Their organ, the *Nezavisimost* (Independence), was for a while their leading tribune, but it soon met with the firm resistance of the government. An especially virulent article, appearing on May 23/June 4, finally provoked General Ehrenroth to go to the extreme of arresting the editor. On the following day, the prince issued a proclamation suspending the freedom of the press as guaranteed in Article 79 of the constitution and initiating proceedings with the court of cassation to determine whether or not the Turkish press law of 1865 was still in force in Bulgaria. The government justified this action by referring to Articles 47 and 76, the former permitting the government to issue decrees in time of national emergency and the latter giving the prince the power to suspend the right of habeas corpus "should disturbances occur of a character to endanger the public safety."<sup>30</sup>

Article 79, on the freedom of the press, implied that the author of a newspaper article could be prosecuted and that if he was not in the country the editor, publisher and distributor could be held responsible. The members of the Constitutional Assembly had assumed that a law would be passed defining the responsibilities of the newspapers in some detail, and it was owing to the fact that this had not yet been done that Ehrenroth was able to demand the application of the Turkish press law of 1865. On May 26/June 7 the court of cassation handed down a decision in favor of Ehrenroth. The decision placed a great deal of power in his hands, for the Turkish law gave the government great latitude. Each paper was required to obtain a license, and the editors and publishers were held responsible for all unsigned articles. With the penalties which the

<sup>30</sup> *Nezavisimost*, V, No. 69 (May 23/June 4, 1881); Simeon Radev, *Stroitelitě na sūvrēmenna Būlgariya* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1911), I, 284-285; Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 50, Sofia, June 7, 1881; No. 57, Sofia, June 11, 1881.

## The Suspension of the Constitution

law placed at its disposal, the government was now in a position to put an end to the press campaign of the Liberals.<sup>31</sup> Early in June, the government had an opportunity to apply the new press law when it objected to an electoral proclamation issued by the Liberal leaders. Without the knowledge of Ehrenroth, the Liberals were taken into custody and held under arrest for a day before the general could intervene in their favor. This was one of the earliest cases of a difference of opinion between the Conservatives and their Russian protectors.<sup>32</sup>

Of equal importance to the restrictions on the press was the decree, issued on the same day, providing for military tribunals. During their tenure of power, the Liberals had succeeded in filling most of the civil positions with men of their own beliefs, and it was largely to counteract this situation that the government felt it necessary to take special measures. The jurisdiction of these military tribunals was limited to the trial of persons charged with incitement to riot, and they were empowered to apply capital punishment.<sup>33</sup> It should be added, however, that this was largely a preventive measure and it was not found necessary to enforce it. Another important decree was that of June 2/14 establishing electoral commissions, the purpose of which was to prevent the Liberals from illegally bringing pressure to bear on the Turkish and peasant voters.<sup>34</sup>

To all of these measures the Liberals objected most strenuously. The more moderate among them were willing to

<sup>31</sup> The prince's decree and the correspondence between the ministry of justice and the court of cassation are printed in *Almanah na búlgarskata konstitutsiya* [Almanac of the Bulgarian constitution] (Plovdiv, 1911), 518-527; for the Turkish press law of 1865, see Aristarchi Bey, *La législation ottomane* (4 vols.; Constantinople, 1875), III, 320-325.

<sup>32</sup> *Nezavisimost*, V, No. 72 (June 4/16, 1881), 1; Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 77, Sofia, June 22, 1881.

<sup>33</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 49, Sofia, June 7, 1881.

<sup>34</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 69, Sofia, June 20, 1881; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 18, No. 14, Sofia, June 16, 1881.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

offer a few compromises. Danev, writing from London, accused the prince of having acted too hastily and suggested that the clear definition of certain articles of the constitution, the establishment of an independent judiciary and the restrictions on the intervention of the army in civil affairs would be sufficient to provide a satisfactory form of government.<sup>35</sup> But Danev was too far from the scene of action to exercise any influence, and the main burden of the fight was borne by such leaders as Tsankov, Karavelov, Slaveïkov and Suknarov. Except for a few voices of sympathy raised by radical groups in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, and by an occasional Englishman, the Liberals had to depend entirely on their own resources. With the restrictions placed on them by the government, they were able to do little more than voice public expressions of protest to the authorities and of encouragement to their followers.<sup>36</sup>

A great impression was made by a public letter from Tsankov to Hitrovo published on May 25/June 6, in answer to the decrees restricting the press and setting up military tribunals. The Liberal leader pointed out the fact that the prince had violated the constitution in several respects, and accused Russia of betraying Bulgaria by supporting the prince in his new policy.<sup>37</sup> But the main accusation which the Liberals made against Battenberg was that his *coup d'état* was unconstitutional, and Tsankov took up this issue personally with the British agent. It was the Liberal claim that, although Article 141 permitted the prince to convoke the Grand National Assembly either to approve a cession or exchange of territory or to amend the constitution, he could not do so without the previous consent of two-thirds of the ordinary National Assembly.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Maritsa*, IV, No. 289 (May 29/June 10, 1881), 4-5.

<sup>36</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 287-288.

<sup>37</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 48, Sofia, June 7, 1881.

<sup>38</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 9, Sofia, May 7, 1881.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

While this may well have been the intention of the members of the Constitutional Assembly, however, the vagueness of the constitution gave the government a good case. For Article 168, as Ehrenroth was quick to point out to the British agent, required the consent of the ordinary assembly only if the larger body was being convoked to consider an amendment. The constitution made no mention of the prince's abdication, and the Russian general saw no reason why the prince could not proceed with his plans within the framework of the constitution. With this point of view Lascelles agreed completely, and the Liberals discovered that their opponents had found another loophole in their charter.<sup>39</sup>

The Liberals now appealed directly to Gladstone, hoping that their great champion in 1876 would again come to the aid of their country, but in this they were disappointed. The prime-minister merely noted his interest in Bulgarian affairs and indicated that the proper way to communicate with the British government was through the regular diplomatic channels.<sup>40</sup> The Liberals continued their campaign in Bulgaria, but with little effect. There were rumors of plans to establish a personal union with Serbia or Rumania, or to elect Aleko Pasha, governor-general of Eastern Rumania, as successor to Battenberg after the assembly had rejected his proposals, but they were not taken seriously.<sup>41</sup>

The electoral preparations of the government proceeded in a methodical fashion. One of their important achievements was in securing the Turkish vote, which was controlled by Nihad Pasha, the Turkish agent.<sup>42</sup> There is no indication of the means used to accomplish this. Another

<sup>39</sup> Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 10, Sofia, May 9, 1881.

<sup>40</sup> Granville to Lascelles, P. P., XCVIII, No. 52, Foreign Office, June 20, 1881; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 90-91.

<sup>41</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 14, Sofia, June 16, 1881.

<sup>42</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 12, Sofia, May 19, 1881; No. 14, Sofia, June 16, 1881.

factor which the government did not fail to overlook was the influence of the exarchate. While the upper clergy favored the prince and the principle of authority, many of the parish priests joined the schoolteachers in supporting the Liberals, who had championed their cause by advocating a form of church organization which favored their position.<sup>43</sup> Exarch Iosif was personally in favor of a more conservative form of government than that provided by the Tirnovo Constitution, because he felt that the Bulgarian people were not yet prepared to exercise full political rights. He was therefore glad to accept Battenberg's invitation to come to Bulgaria and use his influence to bring the full force of the church into line with the prince's policy. But the exarch was by no means a tool of the government. Passing through Eastern Rumelia, he discussed the situation with the local politicians and agreed with them that, while the two parties had misused the liberties granted to them under the constitution, it would be very dangerous to give the prince unlimited powers. In Sofia, Iosif held a meeting with the leaders of the two parties on May 26/June 7 in which he tried to convince them of the wisdom of coöperating under a revised constitution rather than letting Battenberg take full control. But the rivalry between the parties had gone too far to permit such an easy compromise, and in the end the exarch felt obliged to subscribe unconditionally to the prince's proposals.<sup>44</sup>

The Conservatives did not take very seriously the exarch's argument that if they helped Battenberg get full control he might be able to rule without their aid. They had reason to believe that he would not betray them, and

<sup>43</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 13, Sofia, June 2, 1881.

<sup>44</sup> O., M. and B., *Pogled vŭrhu dĕyatelnostta na bŭlgarskata ekzarhiya, 1877-1902 g.* [Review of the activity of the Bulgarian exarchate, 1877-1902] (Leipzig, 1902), 18-20; Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 14, Sofia, June 16, 1881; Lascelles to Granville, P. P., XCVIII, No. 65, Sofia, June 16, 1881.



## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

in their press they attacked the Liberals unreservedly. They even went so far as to call them “. . . the worst anarchists, the worst revolutionaries, the worst enemies of the people, former spies in the pay of Turkey, men without training, most of them expelled in their day from institutions of learning, with no liberal profession and no social position, men tarnished in the eyes of the people, sunken in debt, shameless, ready to sell their faith and religion at any price: such were the Liberals.” Whereas they themselves were “. . . a minority composed of mature, experienced, thoughtful and patriotic men, who had in vain tried to obtain a hearing for a wiser and more prudent policy. . . .”<sup>45</sup>

But this was the extreme view of the situation, held by the younger Conservatives such as Grekov, Nachevich, Stoilov and Gorbanov, who had played no part in the liberation movement. The older Conservatives tended to agree with Exarch Iosif that it was dangerous to support the prince unreservedly, and Ikonomov in particular blamed the Russians for interfering in Bulgarian affairs and inciting trouble by giving contradictory advice to the opposing groups. But, as the election day approached and the hopes for a compromise with the Liberals waned, even the older Conservatives rallied around the prince and Ikonomov himself served as president of the Grand National Assembly.<sup>46</sup>

The elections were held nominally under the regular electoral law, which had been slightly revised by the Liberals in December 1880. Actually, the careful control exercised by the government gave it as complete an assurance of

<sup>45</sup> *Bŭlgarski glas*, II, No. 47 (June 4/16, 1881); II, No. 48 (June 7/19, 1881).

<sup>46</sup> K. Ikonomov, ed., *Sŭchineniyata na Todor Ikonomov* [The works of Todor Ikonomov] (4 vols.; Shumen, 1897), IV, 141-142, 152-153; Ivan Todorov, *Todor Ikonomov i dŕžnostta mu v sluzhene na bŭlgarskiya narod* [Todor Ikonomov and his activity in the service of the Bulgarian people] (Sofia, 1921), 109-110.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

victory as the Liberals had had in their day, and it was only in Tirnovo that the latter were able to elect four of their leaders. As a British observer remarked, "The result of the election held under such conditions was a foregone conclusion. . . ." <sup>47</sup> When the assembly met at Svishtov, on July 1/13, it accepted the prince's proposals unanimously. <sup>48</sup>

### BATTENBERG'S REGIME, 1881-1882

SURVEYING the first months of Battenberg's independent regime, the Austrian agent accurately described the situation when he said that ". . . the Assembly of Svishtov was able to create a dictatorship, but not a dictator." <sup>49</sup> The decision of the Grand National Assembly gave the prince an almost unlimited opportunity to revise the constitution to suit his tastes, but his lack both of experience and of firmness prevented him from overcoming the obstacles in his path. In order to obtain the acceptance of his proposals, the prince had relied on the aid of the Conservatives and of the Russians. Now that he had obtained full control, the prince was faced with the problem of holding their allegiance to him while he proceeded with his plans. It was in this task that his essential lack of statesmanship led to complete failure. As one of the Conservative leaders observed, Battenberg would have made a splendid monarch

<sup>47</sup> Robert Windham Graves, *Storm centres of the Near East: Personal memories, 1879-1929* (London, 1933), 34-35; M. K. Sarafov, "Nashitë legislativni izbori" [Our legislative elections], *Periodichesko spisanie*, IV (1885) 28-32; an interesting account of the elections from the Liberal point of view is given in Tenyu Nachov, *Spomenitë mi* [My recollections] (Sofia, 1925), 13-17.

<sup>48</sup> *Dürzhaven vëstnik*, III, No. 46 (July 4/16, 1881), 345-346; III, No. 47 (July 10/22, 1881), 353; Corti, *Battenberg*, 112; the *Neue Freie Presse*, No. 6061 (July 13, 1881), 1, agreed with the *Times*, No. 30, 246 (July 14, 1881), 5, that the assembly was a farce.

<sup>49</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV, 18, No. 24, Sofia, October 6, 1881.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

in a stable and well-organized state, but he proved himself incapable of dealing with the situation in Bulgaria.<sup>50</sup>

As soon as he had completed his task at Svishtov, General Ehrenroth resigned. Battenberg now confidently formed a cabinet with no minister-president and with few enough able men. Stoilov temporarily took the portfolio of foreign affairs, and was soon relieved by Dr. Vůlkovich, a Conservative who had served as a physician in the Turkish army before the liberation. The ministries of interior and of war were entrusted to Colonel Römmlingen, a Russian, and that of education to Dr. Jireček, the Czech scholar. The ministries of justice and finance were administered by inconspicuous functionaries.<sup>51</sup>

Battenberg embarked immediately on the first and in many ways the most important item on his program of reform—the council of state. The question of an upper house had already been the subject of heated discussion in the Constitutional Assembly, and the proposal for a council of state involved essentially the same issues. But since the Liberals were temporarily removed from the political stage, the struggle now became one between the Conservatives and the Russians for the control of the new council. The Conservatives, eager to see their country develop on the model of a German monarchy, and the Russians, determined to take advantage of the new situation in order to further the interests of their country, supported rival plans for the new institution.<sup>52</sup>

The Conservative plan, put forward by Stoilov and Vůlkovich, provided for a council which would be entirely under the prince's control. This would assure them of a strong and permanent position in the government such as they could never hope for in the National Assembly. The

<sup>50</sup> Ikonomov, *op. cit.*, IV, 172-176.

<sup>51</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 308-309; Klæber, *op. cit.*, 112-113.

<sup>52</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 316-317.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

Russians, on the other hand, felt that their influence would be greater if the council were not so completely under Battenberg's thumb. Hitrovo and Professor Drinov therefore drew up a plan which provided that two-thirds of the council was to be elective, thus taking it away from the immediate control of the prince and the Conservatives. At the same time, Colonel Römmlingen opened negotiations with Tsankov in an attempt to bring the Liberals back into the orbit of Russian influence.<sup>53</sup>

As finally adopted in the decree of September 14/26, the statute of the council of state was based on the suggestions of Drinov, who feared the domination of Bulgarian affairs by the prince and a venal civil servant class. He agreed that the constitution needed to be amended, but he was quite willing that the Liberal leaders be permitted to participate in the new institution. The council was to consist of twelve members, eight of whom were to be elected by an indirect system of voting. A list of candidates was to be presented by the government, restricted to Bulgarian citizens of thirty years of age or over, who had served in responsible state positions. Of the twenty candidates receiving the largest number of votes, the prince was to select eight who would serve for a three-year term. The remaining four members were to be appointed by the prince without restrictions for three-year terms. In addition to the regular members, the members of the cabinet and one bishop could attend the plenary sessions and take part in the deliberations on subjects concerning their special interests. Bulgarian and foreign specialists could also be called in for consultation.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Burián to Haymerle, H. H. S., XV. 18, No. 21, Sofia, September 8, 1881; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 107-109.

<sup>54</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3310, No. 146, Sofia, October 4, 1881; Ikonov, *op. cit.*, IV, 163-165; Konstantin Irechek, *Bŭlgarski dnevnik, 30 oktombrii 1879-26 oktombrii 1884 g.* [Bulgarian diary, October 30, 1879-October 26, 1884] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1930-32), I, 494, 505; for the full text of this statute, see the Appendix.

## The Suspension of the Constitution

The council of state was to serve several functions. With regard to the legislative branch of the government, all bills presented to the assembly had first to be submitted to the council for its approval, and financial bills received its special attention. It also passed on the decrees issued by the prince under the powers conferred upon him by the Svish-tov Assembly. In the administrative sphere, in addition to giving an opinion on any question submitted to it by the government, the council served as final authority on administrative controversies and in an advisory capacity on any administrative question which could not be solved by the regular officials. In the field of provincial government, the council was a clearinghouse for questions of finance and of jurisdiction arising between the various provinces. And finally, the new council was to serve as a guardian of the constitution, warning the prince whenever a violation of the fundamental law was discovered.<sup>55</sup>

Now that the form of the council of state had been decided, the rivalry of the Conservatives and the Russians became concentrated on the elections for the new body. Held under the supervision of Römmlingen, the minister of interior, the elections seemed to offer an opportunity for the return to influence of the Liberals. They maintained their aloofness, however, and their leaders refused to participate in the elections on the grounds that this would be a tacit acceptance of the prince's *coup d'état*. The result was a conservative landslide, and only after a considerable juggling of the returns was Römmlingen able to get as many as five Liberals into the list of the top twenty. A long controversy over the verification of the elections ensued which was a credit to neither of the parties concerned. Drinov, who was a Russophil and sympathetic with the Liberals, was generally regarded as the most appropriate candidate for the presidency of the council, and there was good reason

<sup>55</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3310, No. 146, Sofia, October 4, 1881.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

to believe that under his leadership the council would become a truly national institution devoid of the partisan character which marked its beginnings. But the disagreements over the elections created so much ill-feeling that Drinov finally refused to serve on the council at all, and on December 31, 1881/January 12, 1882, Battenberg reorganized his whole cabinet. Grekov and Nachevich were appointed to the ministries of justice and interior, and Krylov was made minister of war. In the ministry of education, Jireček was replaced by Teoharov, an obscure Russian civil servant.<sup>56</sup>

This was a great victory for the Conservatives, and a new attempt was now made to set the council of state on its feet. The presidency was reluctantly accepted by Ikonov, a man who had been a loyal Conservative in the Constitutional Assembly but who now favored coöperation with the Liberals as preferable to domination by the Russians. As a matter of fact, his main purpose in accepting the new position was to take the initiative in bringing about a reconciliation of the two parties with the ultimate aim of restoring the constitution in an amended form. Under these circumstances, the council of state was officially opened on January 26/February 7, 1882, with a membership of whom half were loyal Conservatives and the remainder either Liberals or prominent Bulgarians from Rumania who had not acquired any pronounced political views. That the Russians should have resigned themselves to a Conservative council was regarded by the British agent as an indication that they did not expect it to last very long.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 18, No. 32, Sofia, December 13, 1881; No. 33, Sofia, December 20, 1881; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3310, No. 160, Sofia, November 21, 1881; No. 170, Sofia, December 13, 1881; Krústyu Krachunov, *Marin Drinov (1838-1906), Zhiivot i deínost* [Marin Drinov (1838-1906). Life and career] (Sofia, 1938), 79-80; "Krylov, Vladimir Vasilyevich," *Russkii biograficheskií slovar* (25 vols.; St. Petersburg, 1896-1918), IX, 472.

<sup>57</sup> Ikonov, *op. cit.*, IV, 183-184; Irechek, *op. cit.*, II, 76; Lascelles to

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

Whatever hopes Ikonomov may have had of winning over the Liberals soon faded away. In the first months after the Svishtov Assembly, the Liberals had taken a very serious view of Russian influence in Bulgaria and there had been some discussion of organizing civil resistance to the prince's government. Under Tsankov's leadership, however, the Liberals soon realized that there was little danger of a strong absolutist regime being formed by the prince, the Conservatives and the Russians. Under these circumstances, it seemed more to their advantage to negotiate with both groups, and if possible to add to the friction, than to side immediately with the Conservatives. They therefore abstained from participation in the council, and on the eve of its formation they published a party manifesto which rejected everything short of a complete restoration of the constitution. Using the broadest of terms, their program was ably directed at the weakest points of the prince's regime. The Liberals insisted that they would accept no legislation unless it were passed by a legal national assembly. In the question of the railroads only the national interest should be considered, but at the same time close relations should be maintained both with Russia and with Bulgaria's immediate neighbors. Honesty and efficiency in all branches of the administration were taken for granted, and the impression was given that if the Russians were to help the Liberals regain power they would find it greatly to their advantage.<sup>58</sup>

At first, considerable surprise was expressed that Battenberg should have been so willing to set up a council of state which took so much power out of his hands. But it

Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 10, Sofia, January 28, 1882; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 3, Sofia, January 15, 1882; Milyukov, *op. cit.*, 58-59.

<sup>58</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 5, Sofia, February 1, 1882; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 12, Sofia, February 2, 1882; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 176-180.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

was soon realized that the prince had little opportunity to exercise his powers independently. The prestige of Russia was so great in Bulgaria that, when confronted only with a monarch who had lost his popular support, the Russian agent could bring pressure to bear which Battenberg could not resist without antagonizing all of the Russian officials. The cabinet, reinforced in January 1882 by the Conservative leaders, was unable to counterbalance Russian influence. As the Austrian agent observed at the time, "The cabinet itself lacks homogeneity, initiative and authority, and has neither power nor control over the functions of the administrative machine, if such a term may be applied to the rudimentary organization of public services in Bulgaria."<sup>59</sup> One of the chief purposes of the council of state had been to provide a strong governing body upon which the prince could rely and which would at the same time absorb the criticism directed against his regime. It was therefore a great disappointment to him to see the council so weakened by the rivalry of the Russians and the Conservatives, and by the abstention of the Liberal leaders, that it was unable to take the initiative in the reorganization of the government which Battenberg seriously desired to accomplish. Late in the spring there were rumors that the prince was planning something resembling a privy council to make up for the deficiencies of the council of state, but it never materialized.<sup>60</sup>

The chief reason for the failure of Battenberg's regime to establish order and authority was the complete lack of coöperation between his two main groups of supporters, the Conservative politicians and the representatives of the Russian government, and the bone of contention was the question of the railroads. It was by now a tradition of Russian policy in Bulgaria that she consolidate her position

<sup>59</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 19, No. 17, Sofia, April 22, 1882.

<sup>60</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 19, No. 19, Sofia, May 6, 1882.



## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

by constructing a railroad from the Danube to Sofia, and it was one of Hitrovo's main aims to see that this be done.<sup>61</sup> During the Karavelov ministry of 1880-1881 the question of the railroads had lapsed, but now the interests of Polyakov and Ginsburg were pushed with renewed vigor by their agent, Struve. He demanded the immediate granting of an unrestricted concession for the railroad, and only when reminded that the National Assembly still had the final word on financial matters did he agree to limit his activities temporarily to surveying the new line, for which service he was promised 300,000 francs.<sup>62</sup>

The real opposition to the Russian scheme came from the Conservatives. They did not object to Russian economic penetration of Bulgaria on general principles, but they did resent the monopoly of the investments which the Russians were trying to get. Under the leadership of the Bulgarian contractor Hajienov, aided by the French financier Queillé, the Conservatives were promoting a railroad scheme which would not only serve the patriotic purpose of keeping out foreign speculators, but would also be an excellent investment for themselves and their friends.<sup>63</sup> The railroad question was further complicated by an invitation from Austria to continue the conference on the settlement of the Vienna-Constantinople line which had been suspended in June 1881 owing to a delay on the part of the Turkish commissioners.<sup>64</sup> This reminder that Bulgaria had obligations which she was required to settle before she could consider any of the other plans did not, however, interrupt the rivalry over the line to the Danube.

There were also other sources of friction with the Russian representatives which had the effect of weakening Bat-

<sup>61</sup> See above, 183-185.

<sup>62</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 311-313; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 183-184.

<sup>63</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 314-315, 321; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 124-125.

<sup>64</sup> Iwan Karosseroff, *Zur Entwicklung der bulgarischen Eisenbahnen* (Erlangen, 1907), 71-72; Corti, *Battenberg*, 119.

tenberg's regime. The revolt in Herzegovina placed Battenberg in a most awkward position. His friendship for Austria and his principles of monarchical authority gave him a sympathy for the Vienna government which was rudely shaken when Hitrovo started organizing volunteers to aid the brother Slavs. The prince was thus forced to choose between two of his most loyal supporters at the time of the *coup*, and here again he finally opposed Hitrovo's plans. He refused to contribute to a fund created by the Russians and also forbade his adjutants to do so. The ill-feeling aroused by this first sharp disagreement with his Russian advisers was soon augmented by disciplinary trouble in the army, in which the prince supported the Bulgarian officers.<sup>65</sup>

The widening breach between Prince Alexander and his various supporters, who had presented a united front during the spring and summer of 1881, and especially the admission of the Conservative leaders into the cabinet on December 31, 1881/January 12, 1882, now gave the Liberals sufficient encouragement to renew their demands for a return of the Tirnovo Constitution. The Russians also had a hand in the reappearance of the Liberals on the political stage. Faced with the refusal of the Conservatives to coöperate with him in his plans, Hitrovo turned to Tsankov for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the Conservatives from within the country. While Karavelov and Slaveïkov had gone to Eastern Rumelia in voluntary exile, and were continuing the struggle against the prince from Philippopolis through a new edition of the *Nezavisimost*,<sup>66</sup> Tsankov had remained in Sofia. It was

<sup>65</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 339-342; Koch, *op. cit.*, 102-104; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, No. 3, Sofia, January 15, 1882; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 8, Sofia, January 15, 1882; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 181-183.

<sup>66</sup> An attack on the council of state as being undemocratic was launched in an early issue, *Nezavisimost*, I, No. 2 (October 14/28, 1881), 1-2; in their attacks on the prince and the Russians, they were aided by Vazov, the

## The Suspension of the Constitution

through Balabanov, a former Conservative who had abandoned his colleagues after the *coup*, that Hitrovo got in touch with Tsankov. During January 1882 Tsankov held a number of meetings in his home, assembling as many as ninety Liberals at one time, many of whom were civil servants. In view of Hitrovo's close connections with the revival of the Liberals, it was regarded as a blow aimed at the Russians when the Conservatives arrested Tsankov on February 6/18 and interned him in the provincial town of Vratsa.<sup>67</sup> This measure was taken quietly and did not provoke any violence. As Stoilov explained to the British agent, "Mr. Zancoff had made Sofia a centre of agitation, and . . . his removal was necessary to calm the minds of those persons who had become excited by Mr. Zancoff's intrigues."<sup>68</sup>

But the position of the Conservatives was too serious for them to be able to dismiss the Liberals so summarily. In Sofia, a central bureau of the Liberal party was formed by Suknarov, and it engaged actively in meetings and in agitation for a return to the constitution. In this effort the Liberals were aided by some of the most prominent of their former opponents, such as Balabanov and Burmov, and they drew up a program which admitted the necessity for constitutional reform. Their plan was to have a national cabinet, including leaders from both parties, which would elaborate the necessary amendments to the constitution with the aid of the council of state.<sup>69</sup> In an attempt to save the situation before the Russians could undermine his regime, Battenberg ". . . caused one of the liberal leaders to be informed that he would be prepared to consent to any

national poet: Petr Christophorov, *Ivan Vazov: la formation d'un écrivain bulgare (1850-1921)* (Paris, 1938), 101.

<sup>67</sup> Marinov, *Stambolov*, 186-187; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 9, Sofia, February 26, 1882; Klæber, *op. cit.*, 116-117.

<sup>68</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 23, Sofia, February 24, 1882.

<sup>69</sup> Nachov, *op. cit.*, 18-23; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 188-189; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 11, Sofia, March 11, 1882.

## Constitutional Government in Bulgaria

arrangement which the two parties might arrive at, and would in that case at once form a mixed ministry. . . ." His only condition was that Nachevich remain in the cabinet.<sup>70</sup> But the time was not yet ripe for a compromise on the part of the Liberals, especially as they could hope for a great deal more with the aid of the Russians. Liberal agitation continued, and in the latter part of March a decree was issued restricting the freedom of assembly.<sup>71</sup>

It was during this period of Battenberg's regime that the labor movement in Bulgaria originated. In this movement, the workers in the printing presses were most active. Four presses had been established in Sofia since the liberation, and the employees came chiefly from Bucharest, Braila and Vienna. As a result, they formed a nucleus of intelligent and, for the first several years, fairly prosperous workers. The *coup d'état* of 1881 and the simultaneous decline of the first years of prosperity, due largely to an expanding labor market, led to a great deal of discontent. This feeling was expressed in several newspapers, which advocated a form of Christian socialism and favored the unionization of labor, and it also took the form of strikes, of which two occurred in 1881. These remained isolated incidents, however, and it was a number of years before the labor movement became an important factor in politics.<sup>72</sup>

By the end of April, the opposition of the Liberals was brought under control by the action of the government, but Battenberg still felt that a firm hand was needed at the helm. As he informed the Austrian agent, two conditions must be met before he could proceed with his reforms: Hitrovo must be replaced by a more reliable official, and a capable European statesman must be brought in to or-

<sup>70</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 28, Sofia, February 25, 1882.

<sup>71</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 36, Sofia, April 8, 1882.

<sup>72</sup> Iv. G. Klincharov, *Istoriya na rabotnicheskoto dvizhenie v Bŭlgariya* [History of the labor movement in Bulgaria] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1926-28), I, 17-23, 29-34.

## The Suspension of the Constitution

ganize the administration of the country.<sup>73</sup> True to his own military background the prince was apparently convinced that if he could get a firm and honest man to set up the machinery, the political system would operate without the support and coöperation of the Bulgarian statesmen. Accusing Hitrovo both of intriguing with the Liberals and of creating discontent among the Russian officers in Bulgarian service, Prince Alexander went to St. Petersburg in May. He had already obtained the emperor's consent to the removal of Hitrovo, and now his chief aim was to get a Russian general whom he could trust. After discovering that he would be unable to obtain once more the services of General Ehrenroth he consulted Aksakov and Katkov, who had shown great sympathy for him in his struggle with the "nihilists," and he finally arranged for the appointment to Bulgaria of two generals: Sobolev as minister-president and Kaulbars as minister of war.<sup>74</sup>

### THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY 1882-1883

ON June 23/July 5, 1882, the new cabinet was formed with the active coöperation of the Conservative leaders Grekov, Nachevich and Vůlkovich. That both the prince and the Conservatives should have turned to Russia for aid after their experience with Hitrovo may be explained only by their complete inability to rule the country without outside help. Their one hope was that the Russian generals would give them the support of their authority without undue

<sup>73</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, No. 17, April 22, 1882.

<sup>74</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 343-349; Corti, *Battenberg*, 122; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 43, Sofia, May 5, 1882; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, No. 22, Sofia, May 20, 1882; an interesting expression of Aksakov's opinion of the *coup d'état* may be found in his letter to Battenberg of July 30/August 11, 1881, quoted in Koch, *op. cit.*, 75-81.

interference in local affairs. In this hope they were soon to be disappointed.<sup>75</sup>

As soon as he arrived in Bulgaria General Sobolev went to Varna to visit the prince, who was eager to win the confidence of his new minister. The prince now realized that he would have to return to a regular form of government before very long, and he hoped that under Sobolev sufficient political stability would be attained to permit the elaboration of satisfactory constitutional amendments. Sobolev's program was quite in harmony with this point of view. He intended to use strictly legal methods and to permit the free expression of opinion in the press, although he did not wish to interfere in local politics. He also planned to lead Battenberg away from the path he had taken in July 1881, and to pave the way for a return to some form of constitutional government. At the same time, he would do all he could to promote the political and economic ties between Bulgaria and Russia.<sup>76</sup> As a first step, the prince and his minister agreed to a new electoral law which introduced the indirect system of voting, with property and educational qualifications for the electors. State officials would not be eligible for election to the new assembly, which was to be reduced in size and the president and vice-presidents of which were to be appointed by the prince.<sup>77</sup>

As regards the form which the amended constitution was to take, Prince Alexander had by now formulated a plan which was the logical result both of his Hessian background and of his experiences in Bulgaria. In the spring of 1882 he

<sup>75</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 281-282; A. N. Shcheglov, "Russkoe ministerstvo v Bolgarii (Vremen Aleksandra Battenbergskago)" [A Russian ministry in Bulgaria (In the time of Alexander of Battenberg)], *Istoricheskiĭ vĕstnik*, CXXVI (1911), 559-560; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 25, Sofia, July 1, 1882.

<sup>76</sup> Shcheglov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1911), 554-555.

<sup>77</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 355-356.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

had informed the British agent that ". . . he wished to govern in a constitutional manner, but that it would be impossible to publish a Constitution by Decree which would have any prospect of working successfully." More experience was necessary before the best solution could be arrived at. "He would however at once insist on three points, viz., a diminution of the number of members of the Chamber, a change in the electoral law, so that the deputies should be elected by double election, and the establishment of a second Chamber."<sup>78</sup>

Three months later, the prince began to prepare in some detail the constitutional amendments which he intended to propose, and he made it clear that there would no longer be any doubt as to the relationship between the executive and the legislative powers. He enlarged on his views with great frankness in an audience given to the acting British agent:

". . . His Highness . . . stated that it was a Constitution such as he himself understood a Constitution to be; that under it the Sovereign is to be vested with full executive power, and that the government will not be dependent for its tenure of office on a hostile vote of the Representatives of the people, 'though,' continued His Highness, 'I should never keep Ministers in Power whom I have good reason to believe to be opposed to the real feelings of the nation.' . . . But until . . . a generation of Bulgarians capable of undertaking the government of the country has sprung into existence, His Highness must be invested with far more power than was contemplated by the framers of the late Constitution, under which his hands were so completely tied that it was impossible for him to do justice either to himself or to his adopted country."<sup>79</sup>

The prince and his Conservative supporters were in com-

<sup>78</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3413, No. 32, Sofia, March 11, 1882.

<sup>79</sup> Kennedy to Granville, F. O. 78/3414, No. 57, Sofia, June 25, 1882.

plete agreement on the subject of the amendment of the constitution, and Battenberg had doubtless derived some of his ideas from such sources as the memoir presented to him by Stoilov on the eve of the *coup d'état*.<sup>80</sup> A more specific view of the changes which they had in mind may be had from the suggestions published by the Conservatives in the spring of 1882. They wanted a bicameral system with a reduction in the number of representatives, indirect elections and a form of coöperation between the parties which could only mean a suspension of the parliamentary system.<sup>81</sup> These views were no different from the ones which they had supported in the Constitutional Assembly, and in fact they represented the only form of government in which a group such as the Conservatives could hope to exert any influence.

During the three eventful years since the elaboration of the constitution, the basic views of the Liberal leaders had changed as little as had those of their opponents. As in the spring of 1879, Petko Karavelov again emerged as the most ardent defender of the political views which he had derived from his study of the British system. From his self-imposed exile in Eastern Rumelia he now published a detailed and scholarly defense of the views of his party, which remains the outstanding political document of the period.<sup>82</sup>

Starting out with the principle that “. . . the best cure

<sup>80</sup> See above, 203.

<sup>81</sup> Reproduced in the Liberal *Nezavisimost*, I, No. 39 (February 24/March 8, 1882), 3.

<sup>82</sup> P. Karavelov, “Bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya i predlagaemité v neya proměneniya ot Konservativnata partiya” [The Bulgarian constitution and the amendments proposed by the Conservative party], *Nauka*, II (1882), 774-809, 884-906, 995-1018; Karavelov published these same arguments in a somewhat briefer form in a series of articles in the *Nezavisimost*, I, No. 40 (February 27/March 11, 1882), 1-2; I, No. 41 (March 3/15, 1882), 2-3; I, No. 44 (March 13/25, 1882), 2-3; I, No. 45 (March 17/29, 1882), 1-3; I, No. 46 (March 20/April 1, 1882), 2-3; the rebuttal of the Conservatives was published in the *Maritsa*, VI, No. 516 (August 19/31, 1883), 4-5.



## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

for most, if not all, public evils is freedom,"<sup>83</sup> Karavelov directed his attack against the three main amendments advocated by his opponents: a bicameral assembly, fewer representatives and indirect voting. He began with a warning against the tendency to imitate Western institutions in a superficial manner. It is true that practically all of the Western countries have bicameral legislatures, but this is not due to the fact that unicameral systems have been tried and have failed. Rather it was the result of a compromise between the new forces of reform and the traditional interests represented by monarchy, aristocracy and clergy. It was to satisfy these latter groups that it had been necessary to create upper chambers, and not as a result of any belief that a single chamber would be incompetent. The clergy in particular should be held responsible for the restrictions on democracy in the West. "The clergy has always opposed everything which bears the name of freedom and self-government," wrote Karavelov. "It has always blessed political slavery and despotism, and has praised them as the reign of God on earth. . . ."<sup>84</sup>

As for England, one should not be deceived by the elaborate institutions and the theoretical powers wielded by the House of Lords and by the Crown. "I believe," wrote the Liberal leader, "that the desire of the Europeans to adopt all the English institutions, without carefully investigating their practice, is one of the chief reasons for the many failures which parliamentarianism has suffered."<sup>85</sup> As a matter of fact, he said, the British commentators themselves admit that the House of Commons wields the real power in England, unhampered by the theoretical checks of an upper house and a monarch. The obvious conclusion for Bulgarian politicians to draw, in view of the simple social structure of their country, is that they could not apply the

<sup>83</sup> Karavelov, *loc. cit.*, II (1882), 775.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 801.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 790, 777-790.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

lessons of English experience more accurately than by supporting a unicameral system. The very fact that both the Russians in their draft Organic Statute and the Western powers in the statute which they elaborated for Eastern Rumelia made provisions for a single chamber gives weight to this point of view.<sup>86</sup>

Karavelov conceded that there were two criticisms of the single chamber which deserved serious consideration: that it would be tyrannical, and that legislation would not be subjected to the careful examination which it would receive if there were an upper chamber. Karavelov admitted that tyranny frequently resulted from the control of the state by small groups, but he saw no danger if the assembly were elected by universal suffrage. However, he assumed that the danger which his critics really feared was that the majority would tyrannize over the minority—that the illiterate peasants would expropriate the small class of merchants and gentry—but here again he felt that the broader the basis of popular representation the less reason there was to fear tyranny. In arguing this point, Karavelov cited the example of the revolutionary assemblies in France, and without apparently realizing it he gave his approval to one of the basic assumptions of the Conservatives. In discussing the excesses of the French Revolution, he argued that “. . . if they are a proof of anything, they are a proof not of the despotism of a single assembly, but of the oppression and demoralization of a people who have been systematically tyrannized during many generations.”<sup>87</sup> Was it not the long subjection to Turkish rule to which Stoilov pointed as having incapacitated the Bulgarian people for a sudden change to unchecked self-government? The second objection to the single chamber, that it would be too hasty in its discussion of bills, did not impress Karavelov as being a very weighty argument. If able men were elected to the assembly the

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 791-809.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 886-887.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

quality of the legislation would not depend on the competition of a second chamber, and respect for the laws would be increased if the people knew that they had been drawn up by their own representatives.<sup>88</sup>

After devoting his main effort to refuting the attacks on the single chamber, Karavelov spent less time on the other points. The proposal to reduce the size of the assembly was clearly aimed at reducing the power of the Liberals, and he could find no theoretical arguments to support it. The Bulgarian assembly was no larger than those of other countries of the same size, and in its present form it had more authority in the country and offered less opportunities for the domination of personal interests than would be the case with a smaller body. Furthermore, a small assembly would tend to lose its legislative character and to assume administrative functions. The expenses of a large assembly amounted to only a fraction of the budget, and the chances were that it would have more talented and able legislators than if its membership were reduced.<sup>89</sup>

The last question was that of the indirect system of voting. Here again, Karavelov approached the problem from the theoretical point of view although he realized that the chief aim of his opponents was to reduce the power of the Liberals. He pointed to the fact that the indirect system was not in very wide use. In the case of the presidential elections in the United States it was no more than a formality, and in Prussia and Rumania special conditions existed which accounted for their electoral procedure. If it were introduced in Bulgaria, this system of voting would give undue power to men of local influence, endangering the rights of minority groups. It would also be difficult for the passive voters to take their duties seriously, knowing that they had little direct influence on the ultimate results of the elections. On the other hand, direct self-government

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 884-900.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 996-1001.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

was the only practical form of political education for the people, for it was in connection with the popular agitation over the questions of the schools and the churches that the first responsible citizens were trained in Bulgaria.<sup>90</sup>

Karavelov concluded his defense of the Tirnovo Constitution with a warning against hasty and irregular changes in the basic laws of the country. He admitted that the constitution was capable of improvement, but he insisted that the necessary amendments be made gradually, using the machinery which the constitution itself provided. There was great danger that in their impatience those with a modicum of education—the intelligentsia—would set up electoral qualifications and become a separate class. If they did this, they were certain to lose the confidence of the people as a whole, for “. . . you can influence the people only until they begin to suspect that your interests are not the same as theirs.” And if the intelligentsia lost the confidence of the people, they could not expect their support in times of national emergency.<sup>91</sup>

While the proposals for constitutional reform were being discussed, Battenberg was preoccupied with the rapid disintegration of the alliance which he had negotiated between the Conservatives and the Russians. At the time of the formation of the new cabinet, the prince had informed the Austrian consul that he considered it a final attempt to cooperate with the Russians. With great self-confidence, he had insisted that “. . . with the choice of these two generals it was his desire to make a final concession to the principle of Russian supremacy, but that in case this new attempt failed as had all the others, he would consider himself under no further obligation to govern Bulgaria with the aid of the Russians, and would thenceforth base his policy entirely on Bulgaria's own interests.”<sup>92</sup> The domi-

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 1001-1017.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 1017-1018.

<sup>92</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, No. 25, Sofia, July 1, 1882.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

nant role which the Russian generals intended to play soon became apparent, and the position of the Bulgarian members of the cabinet was reduced to that of titular heads of their ministries.<sup>93</sup>

The enmity between the Russians and their Bulgarian colleagues came to a head during the sessions of the new National Assembly which met in December 1882. It was the hope of the Conservatives that the assembly would serve as a brake on the Russians' ambitions, for it would show them that opinion in Bulgaria did not favor the Russian plans.<sup>94</sup> Instead, it merely provided an arena in which all the differences of opinion were publicly aired. In spite of the belief of some of the observers that the Russians might support the Liberals in the elections, which were held early in December, they did not do so and the new electoral law gave the Conservatives an overwhelming victory. With the membership of the assembly reduced to eighty, the friends of Battenberg had succeeded in elaborating an electoral law to suit their tastes. The electoral qualifications required either the possession of real estate or employment in an independent profession, although exceptions were made for those with intermediate education and for army officers. Aided by this law, and backed by the active intervention of the government, the victory of the Conservatives was inevitable and they now prepared to offer more serious resistance to the Russian demands.<sup>95</sup>

The result of this juxtaposition of forces was a bitter struggle on several important issues. The first of these concerned the dragoon corps which the Russians had created as a special police force. It had aroused great discontent in

<sup>93</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 26, Sofia, July 15, 1882.

<sup>94</sup> Kuczynski to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 19, No. 41, Sofia, November 2, 1881.

<sup>95</sup> Kennedy to Granville, F. O. 78/3414, No. 81, Sofia, October 2, 1882; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, XV. 19, No. 43, Sofia, November 18, 1882; No. 45, Sofia, December 16, 1882.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the country, and the assembly now tried to sabotage it by refusing to include the necessary appropriations in the budget. But on this point the prince agreed with the Russians and at his insistence the assembly finally gave in.<sup>96</sup>

When the question of the railroads came up, however, the Russians discovered once more that they could expect no aid from Battenberg. As soon as they had heard that the Russian generals were to be brought to Bulgaria, the Conservatives had foreseen that they would have trouble with the long queue of Russians demanding contracts and concessions.<sup>97</sup> They now defied the Russians openly by passing a law which set aside a sum for the surveying of the line from the Danube to Sofia, but at the same time provided that the government itself should do the job. This led to a complete break with Sobolev, and the fall of the Conservatives was only a question of time.<sup>98</sup>

Throughout this crisis, the Russians had shown no sympathy for the Bulgarian point of view. The Austrian agent was naturally concerned with this increase in Russian influence, and he painted a dark picture of the situation in January 1883: ". . . the two generals pay no attention to the limited susceptibilities of Bulgaria's national pride, nor are they adapting themselves to the form of government already established in the country. The regime which they seem to desire to set up in this country is a military dictatorship of two. . . . Apparently the prince desires to keep the two generals until he can demonstrate by the absurdity of their rule the impossibility of governing the country with Russian ministers."<sup>99</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 365-367.

<sup>97</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, XV, 19, No. 24, Sofia, June 17, 1882.

<sup>98</sup> *Dnevniitsi na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Pŭrva sessiya* [Minutes of the third regular National Assembly. First session] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1883), I, 131-132; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 367-368; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 285-291.

<sup>99</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, XV, 20, No. 4, Sofia, January 26, 1883.

## *The Suspension of the Constitution*

The Conservatives on the cabinet finally resigned in March 1883, as a result of an attempt on the part of the generals to prevent the internment of Bishop Meleti of Sofia. The bishop was a prominent Russophil clergyman whom Stoilov, as minister of foreign affairs and public worship, had been ordered by the exarch to intern in the monastery at Rila. The dispute was ecclesiastical in its origins, and a decision against the bishop had been handed down by the Holy Synod. But Sobolev regarded this as a direct insult to Russian interests, and tried to interfere with Stoilov's proper authority by recalling the bishop. The incident was of no importance in itself, but the resulting resignation of the Conservative members of the cabinet left the Russian generals in complete isolation.<sup>100</sup>

This event marked the final collapse of the prince's attempt to govern the country with the combined assistance of the Conservatives and the Russians. Alexander had learned a great deal since his *coup d'état*, and by now he certainly realized that the art of government consisted in a great deal more than building dikes to stem the tide of popular sovereignty, more than finding able technicians to head his ministries. Experience had gradually taught him that sharing his prerogatives with an ambitious legislature was less humiliating than obeying the orders of Russian officials. By the spring of 1883 he was ready to consider a form of government in which Conservatives and Liberals coexisted in a spirit of mutual toleration. As for the Tirnovo Constitution, a number of changes must certainly be made, but they could wait until quieter times. Inspired

<sup>100</sup> Shcheglov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1911), 570-573; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 368-372; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 145-147; L. N. Sobolev, "K nověššej istorii Bolgarii: Pyervyi knyaz bolgarskiĭ, 1881-1883 gg." [Concerning the recent history of Bulgaria: the first Bulgarian prince, 1881-1883], *Russkaya starina*, LI (1886), 717-724.

*Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

by these modest hopes, it was not without pleasure that Prince Alexander saw the two Russian generals estranged from their Conservative supporters. Could he seize the opportunity to form a loyal and popular government free from Russian interference?



# CHAPTER IX. THE RESTORATION OF THE CONSTITUTION 1883-1885

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## THE FORMATION OF THE BULGARIAN COALITION, 1883

**F**REED from the uncongenial alliance with the Conservatives, General Sobolev constructed a cabinet to suit his tastes. The ministry of finance was headed by honest but colorless Todor Burmov, who was the only prominent Bulgarian in the cabinet. The departments of foreign affairs, justice and education were conferred upon such obscure functionaries as Kiriya Tsankov, Teoharov and Agura, and the new ministry of public works, commerce and agriculture was placed in charge of Prince Hilkov, a Russian. Sobolev completed the break with Battenberg by dismissing the Conservative Hajienov from his post as mayor of Sofia and appointed in his place Suknarov, the Liberal leader. The result of these changes was a cabinet which was completely under Sobolev's domination, although the general's secretary admitted that "Such a cabinet could have no deep roots in the country, and therein lay its weakness."<sup>1</sup>

The Conservatives, although they were now alienated both from the Russians and from the Liberals, continued their campaign against their recent colleagues. On March

<sup>1</sup> A. N. Shcheglov, "Russkoe ministerstvo v Bolgarii (Vremen Aleksandra Battenbergskago)" [A Russian ministry in Bulgaria (In the time of Alexander of Battenberg)] *Istoricheski vestnik*, CXXVI (1911), 573-574; Simeon Radev, *Stroitelitë na sùvrëmenna Bùlgariya* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria] (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1911), I, 373-374; A. G. Drandar, *Cinq ans de règne. Le prince Alexandre de Battenberg en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1884), 148-149; G. I. Katsarov, "Dimitür Agura," *Lëtópis na bûlgarskata akademiya na naukitë*, I (1911), 63-65.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

22/April 3, 1883. Stoilov, Nachevich and Grekov presented the prince with a memorandum in which they accused the Russians of trying to abolish all self-government in Bulgaria. They were planning to make Bulgaria a Russian province and they wanted all the Bulgarian civil servants to serve as tools of that policy. In view of this danger, the Conservatives recommended that the National Assembly be convoked and that the generals be forced to resign.<sup>2</sup>

Sobolev, who until the break with the prince's supporters had looked upon the Liberals with the greatest of suspicion, now executed an about-face and reported to Giers that the Conservatives had no following in Bulgaria. If Russia was to restore her prestige, she must pursue a carefully planned policy.<sup>3</sup> The Liberals now became bolder, and held a party congress in Ruschuk with the aim of working for the restoration of the constitution. Radoslavov and Savov were sent around the country to reorganize the party, and a new paper, the *Videlina* (Daylight) was published in Sofia. Sobolev looked with favor upon this activity, and on his part founded the *Balkan* as an organ of Russophil propaganda.<sup>4</sup>

The resulting increase in tension between the prince, the Russian generals, the Conservatives and the Liberals is best exemplified by their rivalry at the coronation ceremonies of Alexander III in May 1883. Battenberg himself went to St. Petersburg in the hopes of regaining the confidence of the emperor and if possible of obtaining the appointment of his good friend General Ehrenroth in place

<sup>2</sup> L. N. Sobolev, "K nověishei istorii Bolgarii: pyervyi knyaz bolgarskii, 1881-1883 gg." [Concerning the recent history of Bulgaria: the first prince of Bulgaria, 1881-1883], *Russkaya starina*, LI (1886), 724-752; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 375-377.

<sup>3</sup> Sobolev to Giers, April 3/15, 1883, quoted in S. Skazkin, *Konets avstro-russko-germanskogo soyuza* [The end of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance] (Vol. I; Moscow, 1928), I, 291-292.

<sup>4</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 378-381.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

of Sobolev. But his sojourn in Russia was marred by the arrival and hospitable reception of a Liberal delegation from the city of Sofia headed by Suknarov, with the approval of Kaulbars, who was serving as regent during the absence of the prince and of Sobolev. This Liberal delegation had been sent in spite of Battenberg's instructions to the contrary, and the incident led to a sharp dispute with Giers in which the Russian foreign minister indicated clearly that he placed no confidence in the prince. Katkov likewise withdrew his support, motivated chiefly by the prince's reluctance to back the Russian plans of economic penetration in Bulgaria, and in later years Battenberg claimed that the chief cause of his estrangement from the emperor was the insistence of the Russian generals that they were not given economic concessions commensurate with their services in supporting the prince's prestige.<sup>5</sup>

But for the time being, Battenberg's relations with his cousin, Alexander III, remained friendly. While at St. Petersburg, the prince had a long conversation with the emperor in which he related all of his sorrows. His report was received with sympathetic understanding, and he returned to Bulgaria under the impression that Ehrenroth would be sent to his aid with instructions to coöperate with the Conservatives.<sup>6</sup> In the meantime, Sobolev had arrived in St. Petersburg with a detailed report of the Bulgarian situation. For some time Russian opinion had been aware that the prince had become an obstacle to Russian plans, and the general's report substantiated this point of view. After emphasizing the difficulties he had encountered with

<sup>5</sup> E. C. Corti, *Alexander von Battenberg, Sein Kampf mit den Zaren und Bismarck* (Vienna, 1920), 132-135; *Denkwürdigkeiten des Botschafters General v. Schweinitz* (2 vols.; Berlin, 1927), II, 235-236; Richard von Mach, *Aus bewegter Balkanzeit, 1879-1918* (Berlin, 1928), 47; Alois Hajek, *Bulgariens Befreiung und staatliche Entwicklung unter seinem ersten Fürsten* (München and Berlin, 1939), 198; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 293.

<sup>6</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 135.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

the railroad concessions, he went on to discuss the constitutional problem. He admitted that the Tirnovo Constitution had not been a success, but also pointed out that the prince had overstepped the bounds of the powers granted to him at Svishtov in 1881. Without discussing the details, he concluded that what Bulgaria needed was “. . . an organic statute which will hold in check both the excessive popular government and the extremes of the prince's regime.”<sup>7</sup>

This view was presented to Alexander III with the backing of Giers and of I. A. Zinovyev, head of the Asiatic Department, and the emperor was convinced that instead of permitting the prince the free exercise of his extraordinary powers with the aid of the Conservatives, the attempt should be made under Russian guidance to establish a constitutional form of government on a limited scale. As Giers later explained to the German ambassador, if Ehrenroth had been sent he would inevitably have come into conflict with the other Russian officials because of his view that the prince's personal prestige should be maintained at all costs. Instead, Ionin was sent as adviser to the prince with special instructions to see that the constitution was restored as soon as possible.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the delegation of Liberals, which had been sent to support the Russian point of view and which even went so far as to demand the removal of Battenberg and the appointment in his place of Waldemar of Denmark, there was a delegation of Conservatives led by Bishop Simeon. In Russia they met with a cool reception,

<sup>7</sup> Shcheglov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1911), 578-583; Schefer to Challe-mel-Lacour, *Documents diplomatiques français (1871-1914), Ire série (1871-1900)*, IV, No. 18, Sofia, April 5, 1883.

<sup>8</sup> Shcheglov, *loc. cit.*, CXXVI (1911), 583-584; Schweinitz, *op. cit.*, II, 238-239; P. Peshev, *Istoricheskiĕ sŭbitiya i dĕyateli ot navecherieto na osvobozhdenieto ni do dnes (s belezhki za zhivota mi)* [Historical events and personalities from the eve of our liberation until today (with notes on my life)] (2nd ed., Sofia, 1929), 173.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

and after the coronation the Conservatives had only two paths open to them in Bulgaria, both of which were fraught with difficulties: they could either openly oppose both the Russians and the Liberals and work for the complete reassertion of the prince's powers, or they could attempt a compromise with the Liberals. Their first move seemed to indicate that they would try the former path. Retreating to the council of state, which was now their last stronghold, the Conservatives issued a statement signed by the vice-president and five members of the council and listing twenty-five cases of violations of the constitution by the Russian generals. In view of their own past conduct, however, this accusation on the part of the Conservatives could be regarded as no more than a political maneuver, and even as such it carried no weight.<sup>9</sup>

The Bulgarian problem had now reached a stage in which no further progress could be made before a settlement was reached on the question of a constitution. From the Russian point of view, the first step was to reestablish a regular form of government which would restrain both the executive and the legislative powers, and which would give them an opportunity to further their own interests. The prince and the Conservatives, however, had in mind a constitutional system more like that of one of the German monarchies, with the executive power in full control. The Liberals, finally, insisted on a return to the Tirnovo Constitution, although they were willing to consider modest amendments if they were made in a constitutional fashion. The result was a three-cornered struggle in which the Liberals occupied a strategic position. Both the Conservatives and the Russians were eager for their coöperation, and the Liberals did not hesitate to make use of their position for

<sup>9</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 395-397; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 155-156; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3528, No. 60, Sofia, August 16, 1883.

the attainment of their ultimate goal: the restoration of the Tirnovo Constitution.

In the absence of Karavelov it was Tsankov, released from his internment in July, who took command of the Liberal party, and his policy was characterized by all the wiles of politics which he had imbibed as a Turkish civil servant. The first step was an agreement with the Conservatives on a program of action. Negotiations between the two parties, encouraged by Battenberg, had been in progress since the fall from power of the Conservatives, and after the prince's unsuccessful trip to Russia they were energetically continued. This rapprochement had been in the air for some time, but it was only the increased power of the Russians that brought the two parties together. As the Austrian agent observed, "The real common basis of this compromise is the prodigious hatred that has developed, during the Sobolev regime, of the Russian yoke which is becoming increasingly intolerable."<sup>10</sup> At the same time the resentment of the Russian regime was growing within the country although the danger of a popular uprising, which Lascelles reported as a possibility which was being discussed, was certainly exaggerated.<sup>11</sup>

The discussions between Nachevich and Tsankov, both of whom were followed rather hesitatingly by their partisans, finally bore fruit in an agreement signed on August 8/20, 1883, in which they promised to pool their resources in the struggle against Russian oppression. In coöperation with the prince, they planned to have him convoke the Grand National Assembly for the purpose of amending the constitution. The amendments to be submitted to this assembly would be drawn up by a mixed commission, and the assembly itself would be freely elected.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 20, No. 12, Sofia, March 23, 1883.

<sup>11</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3528, No. 53, Sofia, July 11, 1883.

<sup>12</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 399-400; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 20,

Tsankov's Liberal colleagues raised a number of objections to this agreement, and their opinions were aired on the following day at a large meeting in their leader's house. The chief objection was that Tsankov had made too many concessions, for many of them felt that with the aid of the Russians the Liberals would be able to regain power alone. In the end, it was agreed that the coöperation with the Conservatives should only be temporary, until the constitution had been reëstablished, and that in any case the Russians should be kept informed of what was going on.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time, the Russians, under the initiative of Ionin, began to bring pressure to bear on Battenberg to reëstablish the constitution under their aegis. It now became increasingly clear to the prince that both the Bulgarian parties and the Russians wanted to see the Tirnovo Constitution restored with amendments upon which they more or less agreed. The question was which of the three groups was to be in control under the new system and it was the hope of the Russians, returning to the arguments advanced earlier by Milyutin and Obruchev, that they would be able to establish themselves in a firm position with the aid of the Liberals.<sup>14</sup> Ionin therefore went to the prince on August 12/24 and demanded that he instruct the coming National Assembly that its only tasks were to approve the Austrian railroad convention and the treaty with Russia for the payment of the occupation debt, and to pass the budget. The main point was that no opportunity be given the assembly to pass a vote of censure against the generals. In the meantime a commission would be ap-

No. 12, Sofia, March 23, 1883; No. 30, Sofia, August 23, 1883; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3528, No. 65, Sofia, August 23, 1883.

<sup>13</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 402; R. Slaveïkov, *Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827-1895-1927. Oчерк на живота mu i spomeni za nego* [Petko Rachov Slaveïkov, 1827-1895-1927. A sketch of his life and recollections of him] (Sofia, 1927), 63-65.

<sup>14</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 297-300.

pointed to prepare the amendments to the constitution. The interview was a tense one, and before it was over a number of insults were exchanged.<sup>15</sup>

The resistance of Battenberg to their demands only increased the zeal of the Russians. A hectic week of negotiations followed Ionin's interview and the Russians were subsequently accused of trying to kidnap the prince, although the precise circumstances of the alleged plot are not clear.<sup>16</sup> In any case, Emperor Alexander III had already lost the strong sympathy for the prince which had influenced his conduct in the spring of 1881. In July 1883 he had written in a marginal comment on a report from Lobanov to Giers: "It is indispensable for us to support Sobolev and Kaulbars . . . and I place all the blame on the prince for this situation."<sup>17</sup>

All the parties concerned were by now intent on seeing the constitution restored. The prince and the two parties needed it for protection against the Russians. Ionin hoped that a strong constitutional legislature would serve as a check on the "foreign influences" represented by the prince. By the middle of August, the Russian agent was able to report that the Liberals would doubtless have a majority in the new National Assembly. The prince was ready to work with the two parties on condition that General Sobolev resign, but the Liberals wanted to keep the Russians on as a guarantee of order.<sup>18</sup>

Assured of a Liberal majority in the assembly after the supplementary elections, Tsankov spared no pains to keep everyone in the dark as regards his plans. Until the very last moment the Russians were confident that he was going to coöperate with them, and the prince was in despair.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 301-304; Corti, *Battenberg*, 141; Hans Klaeber, *Fürst Alexander I. von Bulgarien. Ein Lebensbild* (Dresden, 1904), 129.

<sup>16</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 402-408; Drandar, *op. cit.*, 169-170.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 294.

<sup>18</sup> Ionin to Giers, August 15/27, 1883, *ibid.*, I, 305.



## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

When Ionin interviewed Battenberg again, the prince asked for a guarantee that the assembly would not demand his immediate abdication. The Russian agent assured him that his government had no such plans, and the prince declared his willingness that the constitution be restored.<sup>19</sup> Under pressure from all sides Prince Alexander finally issued a manifesto on August 30/September 11, 1883, announcing the appointment of a committee which was to draw up amendments to the constitution. These amendments would then be submitted to a Grand National Assembly. The cabinet was to remain unchanged until the constitution was formally restored in its amended form.<sup>20</sup>

Even before the Russians had succeeded in bringing the prince around, at the cost of permanently alienating his friendship, Tsankov reached the conclusion that they had outlived their usefulness. The Liberals were now prepared to make use of their strategic position, for neither the prince nor the Conservatives had any bargaining power left. While he let General Sobolev believe that the new National Assembly would be glad to dispose with the prince's services and turn to Russia for support, Tsankov went to Battenberg with his proposals. Although the assembly had been called for the specific purpose of ratifying the railroad convention with Austria, the Liberal leader threatened to block its ratification and support the Russian plans unless the prince restored the Tirnovo Constitution unamended and without delay. The amendments would be made later at the leisure of the assembly. This represented a serious retreat from the position which Prince Alexander had held for the past two years, but he realized that the time had come to choose between the Russians and the Liberals. He agreed to submit to Tsankov's terms and, a few days before the assembly was scheduled to convene, plans

<sup>19</sup> Ionin to Giers, August 20/September 1, 1883, *ibid.*, I, 308.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 309.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

were completed for the betrayal of the Russian generals.<sup>21</sup>

Certainly a major factor in determining the prince's decision, which was one of the turning points in his brief career, was the strong support which he received from abroad. For the Austrians, the threat of an aggressive Russian policy was a familiar menace and they met it with vigor. Biegeleben, who had viewed the growing power of the Russian generals with great alarm, gave the prince his full support and encouraged him in a policy of passive resistance. It is a tribute to the Austrian diplomat's ability that he was able to do this at a time when his government was engineering a rapprochement with Russia.<sup>22</sup> Lascelles was no less active in his opposition to the Russians. In an interview with Battenberg on September 10, the British agent transmitted the advice of Her Majesty's Government that in order to free himself from the Russians the prince ". . . should take such measures as would secure him the support of the whole nation. . . ." Lascelles interpreted this to mean the restoration of the constitution, for he considered this to be the only way to prevent complete domination by the Russians.<sup>23</sup>

Assured of the support of Austria-Hungary and England, and reconciled to the idea of surrendering his extraordinary prerogatives, Battenberg was fully prepared to break with the Russian generals when the second session of the third National Assembly convened on September 4/16, 1883. Following the preconcerted plan, his throne speech merely stated that the assembly had been called to ratify the railroad convention and the agreement determining

<sup>21</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 143-144; Adolf Koch, *Fürst Alexander von Bulgarien. Mittheilungen aus seinem Leben und seiner Regierung nach persönlichen Erinnerungen* (Darmstadt, 1887), 149-150; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 312.

<sup>22</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 144-145; the Austrian agent was surprised, however, when the crisis actually broke: Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 20, No. 34, Sofia, September 20, 1883.

<sup>23</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3529, No. 74, Sofia, September 10, 1883.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

the cost of Russian occupation. He no more than mentioned his manifesto of August 30/September 11. Two days later, however, the assembly was ready with its surprise. After agreeing that the two conventions should be ratified, the answer to the throne speech set forth "the unanimous desire of the assembly" that the prince restore the Tirnovo Constitution immediately and indicate the amendments which he believed necessary. Although it was 11:30 P.M., the whole assembly adjourned to the palace to present its petition in person.<sup>24</sup>

On the following day Prince Alexander restored the constitution, although under strict constitutional procedure this could have been done only by a Grand National Assembly. At the same time Sobolev and Kaulbars resigned with their entire cabinet.<sup>25</sup> While Ionin had been working for a return to constitutional government, the method by which it had now been accomplished was a direct affront to Russian influence in Bulgaria. For the past several months the possibility of removing Prince Alexander had been discussed in Russian circles. After September 1883 the prince was forced to bear the brunt of Russian resentment over the failure of their policy of dominating the Bulgarian political scene. In official Russian eyes, Battenberg henceforth came to represent the success of Austrian and British financial and diplomatic influence. He was regarded as the chief obstacle of Russia's plans in the Near East. So long as he worked in close collaboration with the Bulgarian political parties, and enjoyed the support of the other European powers, there was little that the Russians could do. The moment Battenberg's political position began to de-

<sup>24</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya* [Minutes of the third regular National Assembly. Second session] (3 vols.; Sofia, 1883-1884), I, 1-5.

<sup>25</sup> Koch, *op. cit.*, 150-153; Corti, *Battenberg*, 145; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 314-318; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 410-412.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

teriorate, however, the Russians were ready to take advantage of the opportunity.

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT 1883-1884

FORMING as it did Bulgaria's first coalition cabinet, Tsankov's government was fully representative of the assembly which had overthrown the Russian generals. The position of the cabinet was in a sense illegal in that the assembly had been elected under the restricted suffrage provided for during Battenberg's period of plenipotentiary powers. Thus, while the deputies were members of an unconstitutional assembly, they now took the oath to the restored Tirnovo Constitution. In proportion to the crisis through which the country had just passed, however, this was a minor detail, and it was ignored. The Conservatives were represented on the government by their three staunchest leaders: Nachevich and Stoilov heading the ministries of finance and justice, and Grekov as president of the assembly. As representatives of the Liberals were Molov, Balabanov and Ikonomov. The first-named was a newcomer to politics, and the latter two were moderates who had recently been won over from the Conservative camp.<sup>26</sup>

Karavelov's name is notably missing in this list of ministers. For the past two years he had lived in Eastern Rumelia, where he served as schoolteacher and mayor in Plovdiv. He had refused to play any part in Tsankov's complicated manipulations, and he did not approve of his compromise with the Conservatives and with the prince on constitutional issues. His dogmatic approach to constitutionalism thus alienated him from the coalition cabinet, but within a year he was able to reap the political rewards

<sup>26</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 415; B. Beron, "Dr. Dimitŭr Mollov," *Lĕtopis na bŭlgarskata akademiya na naukitĕ*, II (1912-13), 59-64.

## The Restoration of the Constitution

of his uncompromising attitude.<sup>27</sup> Yet the policy of the Tsankov government was in all respects a moderate one. It proceeded promptly to carry out the program which the Russians had long been advocating. The question of the Constantinople railroad was settled, the expenses of the Russian army of occupation were voted without any trouble and the constitutional struggle was terminated by a reasonable compromise between the political parties and the prince. In one respect only could the tsar disapprove of the new government: it repudiated Russian intervention in Bulgarian affairs. Biegeleben, the Austrian diplomatic agent, informed Vienna succinctly that ". . . the program of the government may be summarized quite simply in the Italian formula: *La Bulgaria farà da sé.*"<sup>28</sup>

The railroad question had been dragging on for so long that the assembly was glad to settle it once and for all. The government reviewed the negotiations with Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Serbia which had been initiated in 1880. Bulgaria had never objected to carrying out her obligations under Article X of the Treaty of Berlin, but protested against the restrictions imposed by the original contract signed in 1872 between the Sublime Porte and Baron Hirsch's *Compagnie pour l'exploitation des chemins de fer de la Turquie d'Europe*. The Sofia government demanded the freedom to grant the concession to the construction company offering the best terms. Austria-Hungary agreed to cooperate in the matter and the convention was finally signed in April 1883. One month later, Hirsch was prevailed upon to renounce his rights.<sup>29</sup> By the terms of this

<sup>27</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 416-418.

<sup>28</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 20, No. 37, Sofia, October 11, 1883.

<sup>29</sup> *Dneunitsi na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sùbranie. Vtora sessiya*, I, 160-176; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 418-420; Iwan Karosseroff, *Zur Entwicklung der bulgarischen Eisenbahnen* (Erlangen, 1907), 73-74; *Accounts and papers, LXXXII* (1883), "Correspondence relating to Article XXXVIII of the Treaty of Berlin (Balkan Railways)," 17-26.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

agreement, Bulgaria undertook to complete the line from Tsaribrod to Vakarel by October 1886. The railroad from Vienna was to run through Nish instead of by the southern route through Kyustendil and Skopie. The latter route had previously been demanded by the Liberals in the hope that it would increase Bulgarian influence in Macedonia, but the northern route was more direct and was now accepted as the more satisfactory solution. In other respects the railroad convention gave the Bulgarian government all necessary guarantees of independence, and the assembly ratified it by a vote of thirty-nine to eight.<sup>30</sup>

The only serious opposition to the new regime came from Russia. As in 1885, when the union of the two Bulgarias which she had for so long championed was to be greeted by her as a slap in the face, so now the reestablishment of the constitution, which she had supported until the last moment, was regarded as a gross insult when it was accomplished by the coalition of the Bulgarian parties in league with the prince. For the first time, Battenberg had clearly made his choice in favor of an anti-Russian policy, and the breach was to widen steadily until the final break in 1886. In Sofia, Ionin talked frankly with his Austrian colleague of the necessity of having Prince Alexander removed. He blamed all the Russian troubles in Bulgaria on the prince's intrigues and suggested that the country would be much better off under a Russian governor-general appointed from St. Petersburg.<sup>31</sup> Giers likewise considered the prince completely unreliable and agreed with his agent in Sofia that Battenberg would probably try to regain his extraordinary powers as soon as he felt that the Russians were safely out of the way.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya, I, 176, 217-221.*

<sup>31</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 20, No. 38, Sofia, October 18, 1883; No. 42, Sofia, November 3, 1883.

<sup>32</sup> Ternaux-Compans to Challemeil-Lacour, *D.D.F., 1re série, IV, No. 132,*

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

The official Russian opinion of Battenberg, when judged by the evidence at hand, was greatly distorted. The prince was indeed glad to see an end of direct Russian interference in Bulgarian affairs, but he had no desire to antagonize the tsar's government once he had obtained his coalition cabinet and the promise of constitutional amendments. As a matter of fact, the campaign to win back Russia's favor was begun almost as soon as the generals resigned. One of the original purposes of convoking the National Assembly had been to ratify a convention concluded during the previous July for the payment of the cost of the Russian occupation. The Bulgarian debt to Russia amounted to almost eleven million rubles, but the convention was ratified as a matter of course by a large majority.<sup>33</sup>

In October Balabanov, the new minister of foreign affairs, was sent to Russia nominally to exchange ratifications of the convention, but actually for the purpose of establishing more cordial relations between the two countries. Since the resignation of the generals, a new source of friction had developed. The prince feared that some of the Russian officers in charge of the Bulgarian army might use their position to weaken his prestige. He therefore dismissed Colonel Rödiger, who had succeeded Kaulbars as minister of war, and replaced him with a Russian officer more friendly to himself. Ionin even had suspicions of a more sweeping army reform which would take all effective military control out of Russian hands. It was thus a difficult mission which Balabanov undertook when he went to Russia.<sup>34</sup>

St. Petersburg, November 7, 1883; Schweinitz, *op. cit.*, II, 245; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3529, No. 102, Sofia, October 18, 1883.

<sup>33</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya*, I, 159-160, 216; "Bulgarie-Russie. Convention pour le règlement des frais de l'occupation russe. (16/28 juillet 1883)," *Archives diplomatiques*, X (1884), 269-270.

<sup>34</sup> Marko D. Balabanov, "Bŭlgarski ministŭr pri ruskiya tsar Aleksandŭr

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

In his interview with Giers, the Bulgarian minister was given a summary of all the Russian grievances against Battenberg. His friendship for Austria, his efforts to circumvent the Russian agents and his attempts to deal with the government at St. Petersburg without resort to the official channels were all reviewed. Giers could only express the hope that things would be better under the coalition ministry. On October 17/29 Balabanov had a very frank talk with Alexander III at Gachina. The emperor was in a good humor and spoke well of the new cabinet, but he raised many doubts regarding Battenberg. Balabanov complained that if there had been any anti-Russian feeling in Bulgaria it could easily be explained by the confusion of Russia's own policy. The emperor admitted that the measures taken by his government had at times been contradictory, but insisted that that was now a thing of the past. His only purpose was to secure the public order in Bulgaria. He had accepted the prince's *coup*, of which he had not been previously informed, only because he had felt that any other policy would have resulted in anarchy. Now he realized that that had been a mistake, and he was ready to lend his support to Tsankov's coalition government.<sup>35</sup> As a result of Balabanov's mission, steps were taken to reach an agreement as to the legal status of Russian officers in Bulgaria. The Russians made the important concessions of recalling Ionin and Colonel Rödiger, both of whom had come into sharp conflict with the prince. They were replaced by A. I. Koyander as diplomatic agent and General Cantacuzene as minister of war.<sup>36</sup>

After the ratification of the two conventions and the

III." [A Bulgarian minister visits the Russian emperor Alexander III], *Periodichesko spisanie*, XIX (1907), 7-9; Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 322-326.

<sup>35</sup> Balabanov, *loc. cit.*, XIX (1907), 9-24.

<sup>36</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 421-426; Koch, *op. cit.*, 164-180; Corti, *Battenberg*, 154-158; Egon Corti, *The downfall of three dynasties* (London, 1934), 290-293.



## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

conclusion of a working agreement with the Russians, Tsankov's main task was to fulfill his promises with regard to the constitution. It was on the condition of these promises that Battenberg and the Conservatives had agreed to work with Tsankov. But as the Austrian agent had predicted early in October, it turned out to be much more difficult to put through the amendments under the new conditions than it would have been had the Russian generals remained.<sup>37</sup> The chief opposition came from the more extreme Liberals, led by Karavelov, Slaveïkov and Suknarov, who had opposed Tsankov's concessions to the Conservatives from the start and who now threatened to defeat the amendments in the assembly. Several stormy interviews were held between the two groups, but Karavelov insisted on retaining the Tirnovo version unchanged. Tsankov even went so far as to win the Conservatives over to the idea that while the National Assembly should agree on the amendments immediately, the Grand National Assembly would not be called to incorporate them into the constitution until a period of three years had elapsed. While this plan was eventually accepted, it was carried through without the approval of the disaffected Liberals.<sup>38</sup>

As it turned out, the amendments passed by the assembly in December 1883 were never put into effect. They are nevertheless significant as an example of the type of constitution which the moderates would have enacted had they been in a majority in the Constitutional Assembly. They also give a fairly accurate picture of the prince's own views on the subject. A number of the minor articles were revised in the light of experience and constituted amendments to which all parties could readily have agreed. The

<sup>37</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 20, No. 36, Sofia, October 4, 1883.

<sup>38</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 428-432; Konstantin Irechek, *Bŭlgarski dnevník, 30 oktombrii 1879-26 oktombrii 1884 g.* [Bulgarian diary, October 30, 1879-October 26, 1884] (2 vols.; Plovdiv and Sofia, 1930-32), II, 420-421, 425.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

title of the prince and his family was now established as "Highness." Provision was made for the representation of the prince's family in the regency, in addition to two elected members. The prerogatives of the legislature were in no way diminished, and approximately the same balance between it and the executive power was maintained as had been established at Tirnovo. No law could be enforced without the consent of both branches. The provisions regarding the guaranteeing of civil liberties remained unchanged and, while the article on the freedom of the press was rephrased, the details of the press law were left to the regular legislative procedure.<sup>39</sup>

The great change was that made in the composition of the legislative branch itself by the introduction of an upper chamber. This was the famous upper house, or senate, which had been the subject of the crucial debate between the two parties in the Constitutional Assembly, and which in a very real sense represented the main issue between the Conservatives and the Liberals. The latter advocated direct and unrestricted popular representation. The Conservatives favored the more moderate and cautious form of representation embodied in the new amendments, which were characterized by the Austrian agent as ". . . an adaptation of the present French constitution to the needs of a monarchical system."<sup>40</sup>

While the National Assembly remained unchanged in its functions, its membership was reduced by one-half, the terms of the members were increased from three to four years, and the ownership of property and literacy were made prerequisite for the right to vote. The functions of the "second chamber"—the use of the term "senate" was apparently regarded as unpolitic—were both administra-

<sup>39</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya*, II, 203-209; for the complete text of these amendments see the Appendix.

<sup>40</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 20, No. 52, Sofia, December 29, 1883.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

tive and legislative. Its administrative functions were entrusted to a permanent commission of six members, appointed by the prince on the recommendation of the council of ministers. The definition of the commission's prerogatives was left to future legislation. Apart from this commission, the second chamber resembled very closely the French senate. Two deputies were to be sent from each administrative district, elected by the district council and by other elected officials. In addition, the Orthodox Church was represented by three bishops. A minimum age of thirty-five years, and either an annual income from real estate of two thousand francs or a university education, were required for eligibility to the second chamber.<sup>41</sup>

The two chambers were not equal with respect to legislative power. With the exception of the budget, over which the assembly was given complete control, no law could be passed without the consent of both bodies. The assembly alone had legislative initiative, although the upper chamber could amend the bills presented to it. The Grand National Assembly was now formed by a joint session of the two houses. It retained its prerogative of amending the constitution by a two-thirds vote, but when it was convoked for this purpose new elections for both chambers were required. These amendments to the Bulgarian constitution thus conformed in full to the ideas which the Conservatives had been advocating ever since 1879, and if the prince was not given all the powers which he had at times claimed, he was doubtless glad to relinquish them in exchange for the removal of Russian interference.<sup>42</sup>

One reason these fundamental changes were passed by

<sup>41</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya*, II, 209-211.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 211-217; Irechek, *op. cit.*, II, 420; D. Marinov, *Stefan Stambolov i novŕishata ni istoriya (Lŕtopisni spomeni i ocherki)* [Stefan Stambolov and our recent history (Chronological recollections and sketches)] (Sofia, 1909), 208-209.

the assembly with so little opposition was that Tsankov had already agreed that their final enactment be postponed. Grekov, as president of the assembly, took the initiative in this matter. After the last amendment had been voted he made a brief speech saying that they all wanted to make a serious attempt to apply the Constitution of 1879. The country had been so upset in recent years that there was no real proof of the inadequacy of the original document. He therefore proposed that the assembly accept the following resolution: "The National Assembly agrees that His Highness be requested in view of the general desire of making a serious attempt to enforce the original Tirnovovo Constitution, to refrain from convoking the Grand National Assembly for a period of three years." After a brief debate this resolution, which was supported by both Tsankov and Stoilov, was passed by a vote of thirty-eight to one.<sup>43</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Prince Alexander bowed to the request of the assembly.<sup>44</sup> By dint of hard bargaining and pressure from many sides, Tsankov had thus succeeded in restoring the Tirnovovo Constitution for a period of three years. He could not have foreseen that its chief features would remain unchanged for slightly over half a century. In July 1886 as the three-year term was approaching its end, I. D. Vŭlchev submitted a bill with the signatures of 118 deputies for the repeal of the amendments. Basing his case on the unconstitutionality of the third regular National Assembly, which had been elected during the Battenberg regime, and on its abuse of the provision that all amendments must have the approval of two-thirds of the members, Vŭlchev proposed that the assembly exercise its right of legislative review. After making a few changes,

<sup>43</sup> *Dnevnik na tretoto obiknoveno narodno sŭbranie. Vtora sessiya, II, 217-220.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 281.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

Stambolov threw his weight behind the proposal and it was passed with only three dissenting votes. The Conservative attempt to revise the constitution thus suffered its final defeat. As passed on July 7/19, 1886, the bill read:

“Article 1. The Fourth Regular National Assembly in its sitting of July 3, 1886, decided that in the passage of the law of December 5, 1883, on the amendment of the Constitution, the conditions and forms provided for in the Constitution were not observed.

“Article 2. The law referred to in Article 1, passed by the Third Regular National Assembly in its secret sitting of December 5, 1883, and confirmed by His Highness's Decree No. 1068 of December 9 in the same year, is hereby repealed.”<sup>45</sup>

Not only were the minimum amendments to the constitution demanded by Battenberg effectively buried but the council of state, which was the only political institution actually established during the prince's period of extraordinary powers, was abolished in November. Ever since its creation, the council had been a political issue. Under the Russian generals it had been a Conservative stronghold, and the ministers had paid little attention to it in their conduct of public affairs. Ikonov, who resigned after less than a year of service as its president, complained that no respect was shown for the council by the members of the government and that no attempt had been made to see that it assumed a position of importance in the legislative process. By the time Tsankov came to power the council no longer served any purpose and the government suppressed it by decree. This action was justified on the grounds that, since the council had been set up during the period of extraordinary powers, it had been unconstitu-

<sup>45</sup> *Dnevniitsi na chetvürtoto obiknoveno narodno sübranie. Chetvürta izvünredna sessiya* [Minutes of the fourth regular National Assembly. Fourth extraordinary session] (Sofia, 1887), 405-418, 452.

tional from the start and had automatically ceased to exist as soon as the constitution was restored.<sup>46</sup>

One result of the passage of the proposed amendments to the constitution was the final split in the Liberal party between the right wing, led by Tsankov, and the left, led by Petko Karavelov. The two Liberal leaders had never worked in complete harmony, for the latter was essentially a man of principle whereas the former was an opportunist of exceptional versatility. It nevertheless took the constitutional crisis of 1881-1883 to bring them into opposing camps. When Tsankov reconstructed his cabinet in January 1884, excluding Karavelov and Slaveïkov on the grounds that they were Turkish subjects as they were still domiciled in Eastern Rumelia, his aim appears to have been that of imitating the British party system. He admitted only moderate Liberals into the new cabinet, but remained friendly with the Conservatives in the hope that a more adequate balance could be struck between the two parties and that they would be able to alternate in power as was the case in England. He even made what he considered an improvement on the British system by arranging that, when out of power, the political leaders should be given diplomatic posts. But in making these plans Tsankov was counting without Karavelov, for instead of arriving at a two-party system the only result of his maneuvers was the formation of a third party. In the elections in the spring of 1884 there were thus three contending parties: the Conservatives, with capable leadership but with few followers, the Tsankov Liberals, moderate and willing to compromise, and the Karavelov Liberals, or Radicals, who stood

<sup>46</sup> K. Ikonov, ed., *Sŭchineniyata na Todor Ikonov* [The works of Todor Ikonov] (4 vols.; Shumen, 1897), IV, 197-203; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 20, No. 48, Sofia, November 29, 1883; Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3529, No. 122, Sofia, November 27, 1883; Irechek, *op. cit.*, II, 524-525; Lyubomir Vladikin, *Istoriya na tŭrnovskata konstitutsiya* [History of the Tirnovo Constitution] (Sofia, 1936), 201.

firmly on the Tirnovo Constitution and whose strength was as yet untried.<sup>47</sup>

To Marxist commentators, this split in the Liberal party is an indication of the gradual evolution of capitalism in Bulgaria. Proceeding on the assumption that in a free political system the parties are truly representative of the different economic groups, they insist that the gradual atomization of the two initial political groups was a natural consequence of the economic development of the country. To them, Tsankov represents the more successful of the independent entrepreneurs, both in agriculture and in the nascent industries, who by 1884 had developed to the point where their interests no longer coincided with those of their less prosperous countrymen. Hence their eagerness for an upper chamber and property restrictions on the suffrage. Karavelov, on the other hand, remained the leader of the ordinary peasant, artisan and schoolteacher. But an interpretation of this sort would seem to place too great confidence in the political parties as mirrors of public opinion. It also assumes too readily that the new economic groups had a definite idea of the effect on their own interests of the constitutional issues which led to the split. The differences in personality of the two Liberal leaders, and the profound effects of the constant interference of Russia in Bulgarian politics, provide in themselves an adequate explanation of the break between Karavelov and Tsankov.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 415-418, 426-428, 435-440; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 21, No. 2, Sofia, January 10, 1884; Marinov, *Stambolov*, 220; the constitutional views of the Karavelov Liberals are ably expounded in the first issue of their new organ, the *Tŭrnovska konstitutsiya* [Tirnovo Constitution], I, No. 1 (January 2/14, 1884), 1.

<sup>48</sup> D. Blagoev, *Prinos kŭm istoriyata na sotsializma v Bŭlgariya* [Contribution to the history of socialism in Bulgaria] (Sofia, 1906), 68-71; and Zhak Natan, *Ikonomicheska istoriya na Bŭlgariya* [Economic history of Bulgaria] (2 vols.; Sofia, 1938), II, 198-199, represent the Marxist point of view; Todor G. Vlaikov, *Sŭchineniya* [Works] (6 vols.; Sofia, 1925-31), V, 326-328, gives a more conventional interpretation.

The elections held in May and June, 1884, for the fourth National Assembly, resulted in a sweeping victory for Karavelov which kept him in power until the kidnapping of the prince in August 1886. These elections were held under a new electoral law which had been passed during the preceding December, but which differed little from the first law of 1879. The elections were as free from violence as any during this period, and were characterized by the customary lack of interest on the part of the voters. Only 28.9 per cent of those eligible to vote participated, and the government's majority in the assembly rested on the support of less than one-third of those who exercised their electoral rights. This assembly is nevertheless interesting as being the first for which information is available as to its composition. Of a total of 188 members there were fifty-five merchants, forty-three peasants, thirty lawyers, twenty-three government employees, twelve former cabinet members, twelve schoolteachers, four priests and eleven members representing miscellaneous professions.<sup>49</sup> In this cross-section of the country the peasants were greatly underrepresented, yet the fourth National Assembly gave an adequate political opportunity to all groups interested in the affairs of government. It was on the basis of this assembly that a considerable degree of stability was finally achieved in working out the constitutional problems of the country.

#### THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STABILITY

1884-1885

"THE peace and the quiet, the orderly work and the general contentment, which have reigned in the country since the constitution was reestablished, are obvious proofs that the only possible form of government for us is the consti-

<sup>49</sup> M. K. Sarafov, "Nashitë legislativni izbori" [Our legislative elections], *Periodicheskò spisanie*, IV (1885), 28-32, 57-59.



## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

tutional, and that if the constitution is obeyed and enforced in full and all laws and regulations contrary to it are abolished our country will be able to develop correctly and fully and to achieve the desired order and progress.”<sup>50</sup>

With these words, Karavelov's majority in the fourth National Assembly answered the address from the throne on July 6/18, 1884, and reaffirmed its confidence in the Constitution of 1879. The reestablishment of the constitution in September 1883, and the advent to power of Karavelov in June 1884, settled the constitutional problem in Bulgaria for the time being. The government was now in charge of the group of men who had been responsible for the main decisions at Tirnovo five years earlier, and their one aim was to prove that the constitution was workable. After Battenberg's *coup*, Karavelov was one of the prince's most persistent critics. He not only attacked the constitutional amendments proposed by the Conservatives, but he placed the whole problem in a larger setting. To Karavelov it was not merely a question of devising parliamentary institutions that was at stake, but the issue of the role of the intelligentsia as leaders of the common people. As he saw it, it was “the sacred responsibility of the present-day intelligentsia” to retain the confidence of the uneducated citizenry, for only if they did so could the whole nation coöperate to build up their newly liberated country.<sup>51</sup>

Karavelov was one of the few Bulgarian statesmen of his generation who considered the problems of his country from a detached point of view. If he could not equal Tsan-

<sup>50</sup> *Dnevitsi na chetvürtoto obiknoveno narodno sübranie. Pürva izvünredna sessiya* [Minutes of the fourth regular National Assembly. First extraordinary session] (Sofia, 1885), 100.

<sup>51</sup> P. Karavelov, “Bülgarskata konstitutsiya i prädlagaemitë v neya promëneniya ot Konservativnata partiya” [The Bulgarian constitution and the amendments proposed by the Conservative party], *Nauka*, II (1882), 1018.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

kov in the petty intrigues of party politics, he was at his best in planning the institutions through which the population as a whole could gradually be educated to political maturity. He saw Bulgaria's problems in their European setting, and he was one of the few statesmen who made an honest attempt to guide his country's policies in accordance with the best precedents available. The very fact that he made this attempt is sufficient to distinguish him from most of his colleagues. That his goal of democratic and constitutional government remained beyond the reach of most of his countrymen, and has since been discarded as a solution irrelevant to contemporary problems, does not diminish the importance of his ideas.

Karavelov's aim was to adapt the most advanced European political institutions to Bulgarian conditions, and to prepare his fellow-countrymen to exercise the accompanying rights and duties. In his words, "the best cure for most, if not all, public evils is freedom."<sup>52</sup> It was his purpose to see that the people obtained the freedom to solve their own problems, and he thought that this could best be achieved within the framework of the Tirnovo Constitution. Defending his position in 1896, Karavelov summarized the point of view which had guided him since the liberation. "Bulgaria should be governed," he said, "in accordance with the main principle of the constitution. This principle is that the prince may choose as advisers and ministers only such men as enjoy the full confidence of the freely elected representatives of the collective national will, that is—the national deputies."<sup>53</sup>

While the main battle against the constitutional amendments demanded by the prince and the Conservatives had

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 775.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted from the *Zname* [Banner] September 21/October 3, 1896, in Georgi T. Danailov, "Petko Karavelov," *Godishnik na demokraticheskata partiya*, I (1905), 37.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

been won, one last attempt was made to have the moderate amendments accepted by the assembly. In October 1884 Prince Alexander joined with Tsankov and Stoilov in an effort to create a new coalition cabinet. Karavelov was invited to join it on condition that he accept the constitutional amendments. The prince hoped that on this basis a national cabinet would present a stronger front in dealing with problems of foreign policy. Karavelov appears to have given the matter some thought, but he finally rejected the proposals on the advice of Koyander, the new Russian agent. His own ministry was now strong enough to stand alone without making any compromises, and Russian policy had taken a stand against any increase in Battenberg's influence.<sup>54</sup>

After suffering such serious reverses, Russia's policy in the Bulgarian question had finally been determined upon. In the final fifty-page report of Ionin in October 1883, the experience of the past several years was reviewed with care and both the emperor and Giers accepted the conclusions of their able representative. What Ionin recommended was a return to the aggressive policy of Milyutin, Dondukov-Korsakov and Parensov in alliance with the nationalist forces in Bulgaria. Only on the basis of the Tirnovo Constitution could Russia hope to maintain her prestige in Bulgaria, for any other policy would alienate the majority of the population. The country's political leaders would only be antagonized by demands for economic concessions and special privileges for Russian officers. But if they were left free to conduct their own affairs under the constitution, the nationalist leaders would welcome Russian support in regaining the frontiers of San Stefano when the proper moment arrived. It was for reasons such as these that Koyander, Ionin's successor, supported Karavelov's

<sup>54</sup> Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3639, No. 68, Sofia, October 30, 1884; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 21, No. 41, Sofia, November 13, 1884.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

independent policy. Tsankov's party was still acceptable to the Russians, and in some respects more suited to their taste than the extremists in Karavelov's following, but Stoilov and the prince represented groups and interests which the Russians had permanently discarded as political allies.<sup>55</sup>

With Russia's support and with a safe majority in the assembly, Karavelov's government was the most secure that free Bulgaria had yet seen. The one direction from which he might look for trouble was the West, for Great Britain and Austria-Hungary were by now firm in their support of Prince Alexander and what Palgrave had once referred to as "the Princely prerogative."<sup>56</sup> Their loyalty to the prince did not go so far, however, as to bring them into direct opposition to Karavelov's ministry. Robert Kennedy, the acting British agent, took a realistic view of the situation and did not intervene. The chief object of his anxiety was that Bulgaria live up to her international obligations. He was soon able to report that Karavelov had no intention of upsetting the *status quo* with regard to frontiers and railroads, and thereafter his dispatches referred to the "Radical ministry" in a cold but tolerant manner.<sup>57</sup>

Biegeleben, the Austrian agent, was in somewhat closer touch with the situation than was his British colleague, and he looked with great suspicion on the cordial relations of Koyander and Karavelov. The Austrian agent himself was one of the prince's most intimate friends and advisers, and he regarded the new minister-president as the most dangerous kind of doctrinaire who knew enough about political theory to cause a great deal of trouble, without

<sup>55</sup> Skazkin, *op. cit.*, I, 330-333; Kennedy to Granville, F. O. 78/3639, No. 51, Tirnovo, July 18, 1884; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV, 21, No. 41, Sofia, November 13, 1884.

<sup>56</sup> Palgrave to Salisbury, F. O. 78/2984, No. 186, Sofia, October 6, 1879.

<sup>57</sup> Kennedy to Lascelles, F. O. 78/3639, No. 50, Tirnovo, July 18, 1884; No. 51, Tirnovo, July 18, 1884; No. 52, Sofia, July 30, 1884.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

having the background and traditions prerequisite for true statesmanship. Karavelov's conduct of foreign affairs he regarded as anarchistic, and the minister initiated few policies which did not antagonize the sensibilities of the Austrian aristocrat.<sup>58</sup> "The men of the Constitution of Tirnovno, the popular leaders," he reported after the new ministry had been in power almost a year, "consider themselves above parliamentary rules. The prince is the only person in the country who insists on the strict observance of the constitution."<sup>59</sup> But despite his strong views on the situation the Austrian agent did not interfere actively in political matters, and Karavelov was left relatively independent to shape his policies in accordance with his principles.

Left free by the balance of forces to determine his internal political and social policy, Karavelov set the course which his successors were destined to follow for several generations. To him it was clear that the popular assembly should take the initiative in all the larger social and economic problems. His great personal popularity, combined with his sound appreciation of the needs of his country, account for the success of his point of view. The laws passed during his second ministry indicate the main lines of his social policy. Measures dealing with taxes, land tenure and reforestation were devised in such a way as to make the state responsible for the public welfare. One of the clearest tests was the question of a national bank, which had been a controversial issue for several years. It had been the aim of Nachevich and the Conservatives to establish a private bank under Austrian auspices. A national bank had been founded by Dondukov-Korsakov in 1879 and for several years Austrian and Russian financial interests had

<sup>58</sup> Corti, *Battenberg*, 171; Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 22, No. 15, Sofia, March 10, 1885.

<sup>59</sup> Biegeleben to Kálnoky, H. H. S., XV. 22, No. 19, Sofia, April 7, 1885.

fought for its control. The central issue was whether the financial credit for Bulgarian industry and agriculture should be in the hands of foreign financiers or of the government itself. The issue was settled in the autumn of 1884 by the establishment of a national bank owned and operated by the government.<sup>60</sup>

Of all the questions which came up for decision at this time, the railroad law is the best example of the social order envisaged by the Karavelov Liberals. The problem of the railroads was one which reached into all phases of foreign and internal policy and its final settlement was typical of the Liberal point of view. In 1883 Bulgaria had agreed to construct her section of the international line from Vienna to Constantinople. The government still had to reach a decision on the economic aspects of its railroad policy and to grant the concession for the construction of the line. In December 1884, Karavelov introduced his railroad bill into the fourth National Assembly with a speech which merits extensive quotation:

“The main principles, proposed by the bill, are based on the assumption that the railroads in the Principality should be the property of the government, and that no private companies should be permitted to build or to operate railroads for profit on government concessions. The government has come to this conclusion as a result of its study of the disastrous precedents both abroad and within the Principality. The construction of railroads by private persons or corporations is always a speculative enterprise, in which the entrepreneurs try to invest a given amount of capital under the most favorable circumstances. Thus the profits of the entrepreneurs are the chief consideration,

<sup>60</sup> Nikola Mushanov, “Petko Karavelov kato dŭrzhavnik i reformator” [Petko Karavelov as a statesman and reformer], *Petko Karavelov po sluchai 25 godishninata ot negovata smŭrt i 50 godishninata na bŭlgarskata konstitutsiya* (Sofia, 1929), 31-47; Radev, *op. cit.*, I, 460-463.

## *The Restoration of the Constitution*

and in most cases this is injurious of the best interests of the government and without substantial gain to those localities through which the railroad passes. It is entirely different when the railroads are constructed and operated by the government. Private profits play a secondary role, the government is satisfied that its interests are not being injured and it even reconciles itself to small annual losses, so long as the line serves the local development of the country and provides the population with the conveniences required in a civilized country. This point of view is so obvious, that there is no need for further arguments or special proofs."<sup>61</sup>

The bill which Karavelov introduced with such assurance gave the government full control over the construction, ownership and operation of all railroads. An exception was made only for freight lines serving privately owned mines or factories. Led by Stoilov, the Conservatives rallied to the defense of private enterprise, and the profound differences in principle were discussed in a frank fashion reminiscent of the Constitutional Assembly. On January 31/February 12, 1885, Karavelov's bill was passed without any fundamental changes.<sup>62</sup> In June, the assembly approved the contract which had been granted to Ivan Grozev, a Bulgarian contractor, and Karavelov's victory was complete.<sup>63</sup> The purchase of the British-owned Ruschuk-Varna railroad, provided for by the Treaty of Berlin, was a separate issue. The special character of the problem

<sup>61</sup> *Dnevniitsi na chetvürtoto obiknoveno narodno sübranie. Pürva sessiya* [Minutes of the fourth regular National Assembly. First session] (4 vols.; Sofia, 1885-86), II, 62.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 62-118; IV, 67-78, 81-82; Karosseroff, *op. cit.*, 74-76; W. K. Weiss-Bartenstein, "Bulgariens Verkehrspolitik und Verkehrswesen," *Archiv für Eisenbahnwesen*, XXXVIII (1915), 1228; Moritz Stroll, "Über den wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgang Bulgariens," *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im deutschen Reich*, XXI (1897), 414-415.

<sup>63</sup> *Dnevniitsi na chetvürtoto obiknoveno narodno sübranie. Vtora izvünredna sessiya* [Minutes of the fourth regular National Assembly. Second extraordinary session] (Sofia, 1886), 3-9, 22-26.

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

and the great expense involved led to its postponement till July 1886, when Karavelov persuaded the assembly to authorize its purchase.<sup>64</sup>

The subsequent development of the Bulgarian state policy has confirmed Karavelov's decisions as to the proper relations of government and people in a country in its position. To him, the predominance of the government in the economic development of the country was a natural corollary of his belief in a popularly elected National Assembly. If the assembly was to be the central political institution, it should not be subordinated in economic matters to the interests of local and foreign private groups. The principles of both nationalism and liberalism demanded that the interests of the majority be expressed through and controlled by the assembly. The Tsankov Liberals protested that there should be ". . . no parliamentary and ultra-plebeian sovereignty: in our institutions and in our customs nothing is divine except the divinity, and nothing is sovereign except justice."<sup>65</sup> With the Karavelov Liberals, the people were divine and the assembly was sovereign. The constitutional honeymoon was soon brought to an end by the great crises of 1885 and 1886 but it was only gradually, and in the midst of a rapidly changing world, that the central principles of Karavelov's constitution were abandoned.

<sup>64</sup> *Dnevniatsi na chetvürtoto obiknoveno narodno sübranie. Chetvürtä izvünredna sessiya*, 452-490, 505-521.

<sup>65</sup> Stoyan Michailovski, *Notre lingé sale. Karaveloff & Cie.* (Sofia, 1885).



## CHAPTER X. CONCLUSION

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**I**F the members of the Bulgarian Constitutional Assembly showed some skill and great eagerness during the debates which preceded the acceptance of the Tirnovo Constitution, this was not due to any part which they may have had in the administration of their country during the period of the Turkish domination. The Turkish administrative system, even after the reforms of 1839 and 1856, had offered no real opportunity for the practice of self-government, and while some experience had been acquired in the conduct of public affairs this was due chiefly to the existence of such autonomous organizations as the guilds and the church. These organizations had provided a wide variety of experience, ranging from the small disciplinary problems of the guild system to the broader questions of statesmanship and diplomacy which were a part of the struggle for ecclesiastical independence. But while these forms of activity produced a number of able leaders, they offered little opportunity for the majority of the population to play any part in public affairs. The energetic movement for the establishment of schools did not penetrate beyond the middle class, and while a spirit of democratic egalitarianism was noted by those who were in contact with the peasants, this sentiment was tempered by the sobering effect of responsibility only with respect to a few local village rights and duties.

As for the leaders themselves, the events of the movement for ecclesiastical and political independence give evidence of an earnest struggle between the small group of prosperous citizens and the larger group of educated but dissatisfied representatives of the middle class. It was essentially these two groups, the former backed by the majority of the gentry, the merchants and the upper clergy and the latter by the artisans and intellectuals, which joined in leading the

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

national renaissance. The moderates, while admitting the necessity for wide reforms in the Turkish system, nevertheless realized that a complete social upheaval accompanying the breakup of the Ottoman Empire would in no way further their interests, and they therefore sought reform through the evolutionary process of cautious compromises with the Greek clergy and the Turkish officials. But the extremists, bearing more than their share of the burden of Turkish misrule and inspired by the revolutionary doctrines which had been sweeping over Europe since the beginning of the century, saw no hope for the reform of the Turkish system. Under the leadership of Rakovski, Karavelov and Botŭov, they preached revolution as the only solution to the national question. They defied the moderates by organizing an active revolutionary movement, and they enlisted all of the current liberal and radical ideologies in support of their aims.

Yet it must be admitted that while a complete revolution was achieved both in ecclesiastical and in political affairs, this was due as much to the effect of European forces beyond their control as it was to the efforts of the extremists themselves. It is also true that in spite of their interest in anarchism, nihilism and socialism, when it came to recommending a form of government for an independent Bulgaria the extremists were in essential agreement with the moderates that a constitutional monarchy was adequate. And finally, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that while the majority of the leaders sincerely adhered to the principles of democracy, the country as a whole had had no opportunity to become acquainted with the machinery of self-government.

Both the provisional government set up by the Russians after their conquest of Bulgaria, and the Organic Statute which they elaborated in preparation for the Assembly of Notables, give evidence of a sincere desire to establish an independent and self-sufficient administrative system in the

## *Conclusion*

new country. The local population was given a share of the political power and the foundations were laid for a moderately democratic system of government. The Organic Statute in particular gave considerable powers to the assembly, largely because of the fear on the part of the Russians that the position of the prince might be occupied by a person completely out of sympathy with their point of view. But the Organic Statute was only a preliminary program, and perhaps the best evidence of the good faith of the Russians was the complete freedom with which the members of the assembly were permitted to alter the original draft of the constitution.

The Constitutional Assembly was a truly representative body and the democratic principles which characterized the constitution in its final form were entirely the work of the members of the assembly. It is true that the most democratic members were also the most ardent in their nationalism, and would have been eager to aid an aggressive Russian policy in the Eastern Question had the opportunity offered itself at the time, but that is no reason to consider the constitution a Russian plot. The freedom which the Russian government permitted to the assembly was due to the needs of its foreign policy after the Treaty of Berlin, and not to any specific desire to sabotage the prestige of the future prince. If, in spite of the democratic and egalitarian tendencies of the extremist majority in the assembly, the prince still received powers which he was able to use with considerable effect, this was primarily the result of the inability of the extremists effectively to enforce their political views in the text of the constitution.

The two parties which made their appearance in the Constitutional Assembly had their roots in the traditional conflict between the evolutionary and the revolutionary points of view which had been so prominent in the pre-liberation controversies. The chief issues over which the

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

national leaders now split were constitutional. The forces of moderation, though failing to make themselves felt in the first test of strength, continued their campaign for the increase of the power of the executive. The extremists, on the other hand, were the champions of the popularly elected National Assembly and saw in its maintenance the best guarantee against the type of oppression which they had known under Turkish rule. The first effect of the economic upheaval which resulted from the liberation, sweeping away the Turkish restrictions on trade and agriculture, was to increase the popular backing of the extremists. The Liberal Party thus succeeded in identifying itself both with the traditional revolutionary heroes who had defied the oppression of the Turk and the Greek, and with the liberal constitutional ideas of Western Europe which seemed to offer new opportunities for peace and prosperity.

In Russia, the defeat at Berlin had given a preponderance to Giers' policy of compromise with England and Austria-Hungary—a policy which implied the strict observance of the Treaty of Berlin, the restraint of the popular forces in Bulgaria and a benevolent attitude towards the new prince. But the more active Russian policy of maintaining her influence in the Near East was carried on by Milyutin. Through his influence at the court and through the military officials in Bulgaria he urged the policy of giving free reign to the extremists in their political plans in order to assure their coöperation with Russia when the Near East should again become the center of European diplomacy.

It was this latter eventuality which Austria and England feared, and they agreed to work together to prevent Russia from making Bulgaria a base for new operations in the Balkan peninsula. But while they agreed as to the aim, they disagreed as to the method. The Austrian agent saw in the young Hessian prince and in the leaders of the Conservative Party the best bulwark against Russian influence.

## *Conclusion*

Both the desire of the prince to control the army and his policy of working for the increase of his constitutional prerogatives with the support of the Conservatives seemed to offer Austria the best possible assurance of peace in the Balkans. The British agent, on the other hand, placed no reliance on the inexperienced prince and the small party of the moderates. On the contrary, he insisted that the nationalism of the Liberal Party, even though it received the support of the leaders of the aggressive Russian policy, was in reality the strongest force in the country opposing Russian domination. He saw that while the Liberals invited and made use of the support of Milyutin's followers, they were very jealous of their independent position and would revolt as soon as the Russians began to demand concessions in return for their aid.

In the midst of this conflict of political parties and imperial policies stood Prince Alexander of Battenberg, young and proud, but inexperienced and unbending. His training had prejudiced him against the idea of a liberal constitutional monarchy, and his brief experience with the Russian army in the field had convinced him that the Slavs had a great deal to learn from the Germans in matters of civil and military administration. His hostility to the Russians was only increased by the misunderstanding with regard to his powers of constitutional amendment which occurred on his accession to power. When the parliamentary system met its first real test in the autumn of 1879, the prince was faced with a major decision. With the support of the moderate branch of Russian policy and at the advice of the Austrian consul, he made use of his right of dissolving the assembly, thus setting a precedent of extreme action which gave evidence of his firm opposition to the parliamentary system.

When the Liberals again won the election in the spring of 1880, however, the prince was not prepared to depart from the procedure indicated by the constitution. The

Liberals received the active support of the aggressive branch of Russian policy and at St. Petersburg the emperor agreed that the Liberals should be given a fair chance. The result was one year of government by the extremist and nationalist Liberals, marked by the complete domination of the executive branch of government by the legislative. During this period full use was made by the National Assembly of the parliamentary system provided for by the Tirnovo Constitution, and within its framework the prince had no means of increasing his prerogatives. It was the assassination of Alexander II in the spring of 1881 which finally gave Battenberg the opportunity to relieve himself of the increasingly hostile power of the popular assembly. With the tacit approval of the Russian government, which was now profoundly impressed with the necessity of maintaining the monarchical principle, and with the active support both of the Russian officials and of the Conservative party, the prince decided to repudiate the constitution.

The aim of the prince's *coup d'état* of April 1881 was the eventual elaboration of a conservative constitution in which the legislative branch would be given only a modest share of the power. With this plan both the Russian and the Bulgarian supporters of the prince were in full agreement. But it soon became evident that the chief desire of the Russians was to gain a dominant position in the political and economic affairs of Bulgaria at the expense both of the prince and of the Conservatives. The result was the complete collapse of the prince's experiment in government by decree, and the formation of a coalition between the Conservatives and the moderate wing of the Liberal party. The purpose of this coalition was to free the country from Russian influence, and it was agreed that when this was done it would still be necessary to make certain changes in the constitution in the direction of the curtailment of the prerogatives of the assembly. Faced with this opposition in the

## *Conclusion*

autumn of 1883, the Russian members of the cabinet resigned and returned to St. Petersburg, with the news that Battenberg had finally revealed his true inclinations by siding with the enemies of Russian influence in Bulgaria.

While the Bulgarian coalition had been forced to champion the return to constitutional methods in order to defeat Russian influence, it was unable to gain the support of the voters even after agreeing to postpone the amendment of the constitution for three years. The accession to power of the extremist wing of the Liberal party in the summer of 1884 marked the end of the active constitutional struggle. For two years, the government operated successfully under the parliamentary system, and during this period it gradually assumed the form of a paternalistic regime controlled by the popularly elected assembly and actively interested in all phases of national life.

The beginnings of constitutional government in Bulgaria were thus characterized by the bitterness caused by the constant interaction of internal and foreign affairs. Within the country the traditional forces of nationalism and egalitarianism were dominant, and under normal circumstances the Liberals would have had no difficulty in winning the full support of the country. This natural balance was upset by the policies of the European empires which were pursuing aims completely dissociated from the problems of government in Bulgaria. The half-hearted coöperation of Austria-Hungary and England only added to the political troubles when, each trying in its own way to prevent Russian aggression, the two countries supported the rival parties. But a far more profound source of disorder was created by the dichotomous policy of the Russian empire, wavering between the desire to encourage the nationalist forces in Bulgaria and the fear lest the authority of the prince be undermined by the extremist assembly. The final element of confusion was injected by the prince

## *Constitutional Government in Bulgaria*

himself, with his twin aims of increasing his own constitutional powers and of decreasing the influence of Russia at a time when the former aim could only be achieved by the sacrifice of the latter.

If, therefore, the attempts to find a form of government suitable for Bulgaria resulted in a great deal of confusion and strife, only part of the blame should be placed on the shoulders of the Bulgarian leaders. Both the policies of the European empires and the personal ambition of the prince must be given their share of the responsibility. The constitutional struggle within Bulgaria was both sincere and fundamental and the difficulties which it had to surmount, which would have been considerable under the most favorable circumstances, were greatly increased by the complications arising from the unsettled state of the Eastern Question.



## APPENDICES



## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY<sup>1</sup>

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THE present writer was fortunate, in the summer of 1939, in being able to use the unpublished diplomatic papers of the British and Austro-Hungarian governments dealing with Bulgarian affairs in the years 1878-1885. The former, housed in the Public Record Office, consist of the reports of the British diplomatic agents: Palgrave, Ashburnham, Lascelles and Kennedy. The latter, in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, contain the reports of von Zwiedinek, von Khevenhüller, von Burián and von Biegeleben. As the primary purpose of this study is to examine the constitutional struggle in Bulgaria, no effort was made to use the British and Austrian archives for the purpose of determining the policies of the two empires in the Eastern Question except insofar as they affected the constitution directly. The use of these papers is greatly facilitated by the massive *Gesamtinventar* (4 vols.; Vienna, 1936-38) prepared by Ludwig Bittner and his assistants, and the typewritten *List of records of the Foreign Office, 1879-1885* (2 vols.; London, 1930) compiled by the Public Record Office.

The value of these archives for this study lies in the material which they contain concerning the various political groups in Bulgaria, the political and constitutional views of the prince and of the Bulgarian leaders, and the numerous factors which influenced the constitutional struggle. The diplomatic agents of both England and Austria-Hungary were on terms of personal friendship with Alexander of Battenberg and with the political leaders, and their reports contain detailed and frequently verbatim accounts of their interviews and conversations. In addition, a number of documents of state and pamphlets, frequently unobtainable elsewhere, are included in the reports.

On the whole, the Austrian documents are more detailed in matters of politics and government, frequently including long supplementary reports on specific problems. In both cases, however, these diplomatic reports proved to be a most valuable source both of information and of interpretation, and the con-

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of items which have not already been mentioned in the footnotes, the works discussed here are cited by English title and in abbreviated form.

## Appendices

flicting points of view which the Austrian and British diplomats frequently represent served as a check on their respective accounts. A further circumstance which makes these documents particularly valuable is the fact that the dramatic events of 1885 and 1886 have monopolized historical interest. The biographies of Battenberg and the histories treating of this period all give special weight to the circumstances surrounding the fall of Prince Alexander, and his struggle with the constitution and with the political parties are brought in only as secondary factors to explain his break with Russia. In the contemporary reports of the Austrian and British agents, on the other hand, the constitutional struggle comes out in its true proportions as the main issue in the period before the union with Eastern Rumelia.

While these are the only unpublished sources used in this study, mention should be made of important sources used by several other writers. In many ways the most valuable monograph consulted for this study was S. Skazkin's *End of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance* (vol. I; Moscow, 1928), whose detailed account of the Russian policy in Bulgaria is based on the archives of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Asiatic Department. E. Grimm, in his brief interpretative article on Russian-Bulgarian relations which appeared in the *Novyi Vostok*, V (1924), consulted these same archives and in addition those of the Russian Holy Synod, although he refers to them only casually and does not quote them directly. The German archives were consulted by H. Bennecke in his study of Bismarck's Bulgarian policy (Dresden, 1930).

The bulk of the private papers of Alexander of Battenberg were destroyed after his death in 1893 by his brother Louis.<sup>2</sup> Such papers as remained were used by E. C. Corti in his biography of the prince (Vienna, 1920). Also of great interest in this connection are the private papers of the prince's father, Alexander of Hesse, on which Corti's *Downfall of three dynasties* (London, 1934) is based. Radev's *Builders of contemporary Bulgaria* (2 vols.; Sofia, 1911) is likewise based to a considerable extent on unpublished materials. He not only used the archives of the Bulgarian council of ministers and a number of unpublished

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Dr. Assène Count Hartenau, son of Prince Alexander, to the author, Vienna, May 5, 1939.

## Bibliographical Essay

memoirs, but he also obtained direct oral information from numerous participants in the events with which he deals.

As for published sources, the official sets of French and German documents contain little of interest. Some important extracts from the British diplomatic documents, particularly the correspondence concerning Battenberg's *coup d'état* of April 1881, are published in the *Parliamentary Papers*. The Bulgarian government has published the minutes of the Constitutional Assembly (1st ed., Sofia, 1879; 2nd abridged ed., Sofia, 1890) as well as those of the subsequent National Assemblies. The former is of particular value to the present study. Of great interest are the *Documents from the secret archives of the Russian government* published by Stambolov's partisan, D. Petkov, in 1893. In addition to the original publication, translations were issued in French and German under the editorship of R. Léonoff, and in Russian by the Social Democratic Workers' Party in Geneva. These documents deal with the period from 1881 to 1890, and purport to have been stolen from the Russian consulate in Ruschuk and the legation in Bucharest by one Jacobsohn, a dragoman. The picture which they paint of Russian activity in Bulgaria is a dark one, and the materials provided a notable contribution to Stambolov's anti-Russian policy. While a sharp attack on this publication was delivered in 1893 by P. Kisimov, a political exile, in his *Open letter to Mr. D. Petkov*, who published the volume, no direct evidence was produced to disprove its validity. These documents are highly recommended by Radev and Uebersberger, and are used by Langer and Hajek. Skazkin, however, who is the only scholar who has had the opportunity to compare the Stambolov publication with the originals in the Russian archives, does not support this view. In his opinion, this set of documents is ". . . a crude and ignorant forgery. . . ."³ This verdict is certainly the most authoritative yet given on the subject, and no reliance has been placed on Petkov's secret documents in the present study.

The bibliographical aids for the study of Bulgarian history are few in number, but such as exist cover the ground very adequately. For the nineteenth century as a whole, the standard work is A. Teodorov-Balan's catalogue of the first century

³ S. Skazkin, *Konets avstro-rusko-germanskogo soyuza* [The end of the Austrian-Russian-German alliance] (Vol. I; Moscow, 1928), I, 295.

## Appendices

of Bulgarian publishing, 1806-1905 (Sofia, 1909). This may be supplemented by V. A. Pogorelov's list of books published in the Bulgarian language in the period 1802 to 1877 (Sofia, 1923), revised and corrected by S. Stanimirov in his article in the *Godishnik na narodnata biblioteka v Ploudiv* (Sofia, 1926). Certain problems of the bibliography of the Bulgarian renaissance are treated in James F. Clarke, "The first Bulgarian book," *Harvard Library notes*, III, No. 7 (March, 1940), 295-302. For the more recent period, the *Bibliographical bulletin* (Sofia, 1897ff.) issued by the Bulgarian National Library is quite indispensable. For materials in Western European languages, the standard work is still Robert J. Kerner, *Slavic Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1918). Modern Bulgarian historiography has been surveyed more recently by several able scholars: Joseph Matl's article in the *Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven*, new series, I (1926), is the broadest in scope, Ludwig Widerszal in the *Przeglad historyczny*, second series, XIII (1935), discusses recent books in the period of the Bulgarian national renaissance, and Philip E. Mosely reviews "The post-war historiography of modern Bulgaria" in the *Journal of modern history*, IX (1937). N. V. Mihov (Mikhoff, Michoff) has made exhaustive studies of Western materials for Turkish and Bulgarian history in the last century (4 vols.; Sofia, 1914-34), of periodical articles in this field (Sofia, 1938) and of French and German references to Bulgaria and her people (2 vols.; Lausanne and Sofia, 1918-29). A similar study has been made by Jean G. Kersopoulos of French books and articles published between 1613 and 1937 dealing with Bulgaria (Athens, 1937). The Bulgarian periodical press is very competently handled in Yu. Ivanov's catalogue covering the period from its beginnings in 1844 to 1890 (Sofia, 1893). Its study is further facilitated by the *Guide to the Bulgarian periodical publications in the National Library in Sofia, 1844-1900* (Sofia, 1903). A good review of Bulgarian legal publications in the nineteenth century will be found in the articles of D. P. Konsulov and S. S. Bobchev in the *Yubileen spomen za desetgodishninata na "Yuridicheski prægled"* (Sofia, 1902).

Of the general accounts of this period of Bulgarian history, that of Simeon Radev is still unrivalled both in its wealth of detail and in the use which it makes of source materials. It is somewhat out of date, however, as a great deal of new informa-

## Bibliographical Essay

tion has been added by subsequent biographies and monographs. Radev's position in Bulgarian historiography has been appraised by N. Milev in the *Zeitschrift für osteuropäische Geschichte*, III (1913) and, more recently, by R. Rusev in the *Filosofski pregled*, VII (1935). Of the contemporary accounts of Bulgarian politics, those of A. G. Drandar (Paris, 1884 and 1896), Spiridion Gopčević (Leipzig, 1886) and A. E. von Huhn (London, 1886) are of considerable interest. Others, however, such as James Lewis Farley, *New Bulgaria* (London, 1880), J. G. C. Minchin, *Bulgaria since the war* (London, 1880) and *Growth of freedom in the Balkan peninsula* (London, 1886), Louis Leger, *La Bulgarie* (Paris, 1885), J. Samuelson, *Bulgaria past and present* (London, 1888), Léon Lamouche, *La Bulgarie dans le passé et le présent* (Paris, 1892), A. V. Vereshchagin, *U Bolgar i zagranitsej 1881-1893* [In Bulgaria and abroad, 1881-1893] (St. Petersburg, 1896), and Von einem Diplomat [Philipp Franz Bresnitz] *Bulgarien und der bulgarische Fürstenhof* (2nd ed., Berlin and Leipzig, 1896), are of little value to the historian. Edward Dicey's *The peasant state. An account of Bulgaria in 1894* (London, 1894) is a unique collection of misinformation.

Of the accounts published since the turn of the century the majority are, at best, no more than convenient summaries of the political facts. In this category the following items may be mentioned: N. R. Ovsyanyi, *Bŭlgariya i bolgary* [Bulgaria and the Bulgarians] (St. Petersburg, 1900), Georges Bousquet, *Histoire du peuple bulgare* (Paris, 1909), A. L. Pogodin, *Istoriya Bolgarii* [History of Bulgaria] (St. Petersburg, 1910), W. Ruland, *Geschichte der Bulgaren* (Berlin, 1911), V. N. Slatarski and N. Staneff, *Geschichte der Bulgaren* (2 vols.; Leipzig, 1917-18), Jacques Ancel, *L'unité de la politique bulgare, 1870-1919* (Paris, 1919), Lord Edward Gleichen, *Bulgaria and Romania* (London, 1924) and Nikola Stanev, *Istoriya na nova Bŭlgariya, 1878-1928* [History of modern Bulgaria, 1878-1928] (Sofia, 1929). Kosta Todorov's recent *Politička istorija savremene bulgarske* [Political history of contemporary Bulgaria] (Belgrade, 1938) is a political tract rather than a work of scholarship. Most of these general accounts have little bearing on the specific topic of the present study, and few of them are based on Bulgarian materials. Far in advance of the average run of these books is František Hýbl's *Dějiny národa bulharského* [History of the Bulgarian people] (2 vols.; Prague, 1930). The

## Appendices

standard reference works on general Balkan history all include appropriate and conventional sections on Bulgaria, and in addition a considerable number of lesser accounts are available which warrant no mention at all.

A number of volumes, however, are of particular interest to the present study and must be examined more carefully, P. A. Matvéev, with his *Bulgaria after the Treaty of Berlin* (St. Petersburg, 1887), is the leading apologist of the nationalist Russian point of view. Similar in aim, but smaller in scope, is the account of S. S. Tatishchev, published in the collection of his papers entitled *From the past of Russian diplomacy* (St. Petersburg, 1890). The most recent study is that of Professor Alois Hajek (München and Berlin, 1939), of the University of Vienna, which adds no new material and which overlooks such an important monograph as that of Skazkin. Hajek makes no use of the Austrian archives, and his volume is further handicapped by his main thesis which holds that Prince Alexander of Battenberg was Bulgaria's chief bulwark against the crushing force of Russian imperialism.

The position of Alexander of Battenberg was such that most of his biographies are in fact histories of Bulgaria during the period of his reign. Of the older lives, those of Koch (Darmstadt, 1887), Golowine (Vienna, 1896), and Klæber (Dresden, 1904) are still valuable, especially for the internal political events of his career. Little attention is paid, however, to the strictly constitutional problems. Corti adds a great deal to our information on the prince's relations with Germany and Russia, but the affairs of Bulgaria proper are seriously neglected. The shorter lives by Tsanov (Plovdiv, 1895) and Glaser (Bensheim, 1901) are of little value. The numerous contemporary periodical articles dealing with Battenberg's adventures are, with scarcely an exception, highly romanticized. They are useful only as a barometer of the unbalanced state of mind of the journalistic profession in the 1880's.

While Battenberg naturally receives the most attention on the part of the biographers, reliable accounts are also available of Stambolov, Slaveïkov, Karavelov, Stoilov and Ikononov. Of particular interest is Marinov's life of Stambolov (Sofia, 1909), as the author was himself a member of the Constitutional Assembly and was active in public affairs in the first years of the principality's history. Beaman's *M. Stambuloff* (London, 1895)



is valuable only for the later years of his career, as is also the collection of studies edited by N. Genadiev (Sofia, 1921). Plachkov's life of Stoilov (Sofia, 1932) is important for the use which it makes of his private papers. While there is no definitive life of Petko Karavelov, the accounts of G. T. Danailov and of Iv. Georgov in the memorial volume published by the Democratic Party on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death (Sofia, 1929) are quite satisfactory. Reliable biographies are also available of M. S. Drinov, by K. Krachunov (Sofia, 1938), and of Slaveïkov, by one of his sons (Sofia, 1927). Of the many biographies of the leaders in the movement for national liberation, those by Professor M. P. Arnaudov of Rakovski (Sofia, 1922), Ilarion Makariopolski (2 vols.; Sofia, 1925) and Seliminski (Sofia, 1938) are without doubt the most distinguished. Arnaudov's article on Rakovski's political ideas in *Rodina*, I (1938-39), examines some new evidence. An invaluable source of biographical information is Yu. Ivanov's *Bulgarian periodical press* (Sofia, 1893) which covers the period from 1844 to 1890. The active role of the political press was such that Ivanov's biographical sketches of the newspaper editors include most of the political leaders of the period. Further biographical material is available in the histories of Bulgarian literature by Arnaudov (6 vols.; Sofia, 1929-30), Penev (4 vols.; Sofia, 1930-36) and Hateau (Paris, 1937), and in the *Bulgarian encyclopedia* (Sofia, 1936) of the Danchovs. There is no standard biographical dictionary.

The comparative scarcity of good biographies is to a great extent compensated for by the memoirs and diaries of some of the most prominent of the participants in the political struggle. Stoilov, in the fragments of his diary which have been published in *Bŭlgarska misŭl*, I (1925), gives an intimate and unadorned account of the political crisis of 1879 from the point of view of the prince's household. Todor Ikonov's memoirs, in the fourth volume of his *Works* (4 vols.; Shuman, 1897), reveal his part in the Constitutional Assembly and in the controversies accompanying the setting up of the council of state in 1881, and also reveal the candid opinions of an outstanding Bulgarian patriot who could always look at the political issues of the day from an impartial point of view. An interesting life of Ikonov has been written by Ivan Todorov (Sofia, 1921), and useful biographies exist of Exarch Antim I by I. Pandaleev

Ormandzhiev (Sofia, 1928), of Metropolitan Kliment by M. Stojanow (Sofia, 1931) and of Naïden Gerov by T. Panchov (Sofia, 1923). The latter's published papers and letters, edited by T. Panchov and M. G. Popruzhenko (4 vols.; Sofia, 1911-32), are among the most important sources of information on the liberation movement.

M. S. Drinov's recollections of his role in the Constitutional Assembly may be found in the third volume of his *Works* (3 vols.; Sofia, 1909-15), and M. D. Balabanov has published brief excerpts from his political memoirs in the *Periodichesko spisanie*, XIX (1907). Of less importance for the present study are the memoirs of I. E. Geshov (Sofia, 1916), P. I. Peshev (2nd rev. ed., Sofia, 1929) and T. Vasilyov (Sofia, 1934). Nachov's autobiography (Sofia, 1925) gives an account of the political events after 1881 from the point of view of a minor Liberal politician. It was not possible to obtain copies of three other autobiographical items which doubtless throw more light on the Liberal point of view: P. R. Slaveïkov's *My last trip to Sofia* (1883) and *Reflections on our situation* (1886), and Dragan Tsankov's *Catechism for representative government* (1905). And finally, Karavelov's tract on "The Bulgarian constitution and the amendments proposed by the Conservative party," in *Nauka*, II (1882), may properly be included in this list. If it does not contain any remarks on the statesman's life, it certainly is a most thorough intellectual autobiography, for in it the author musters all of the study of political theory which occupied his years in Russia.

The Russian side of the Bulgarian situation is also well represented by autobiographical materials. The most voluminous are those of General Parensov, entitled *From the past*, which first appeared serially in the *Russkaya starina*, CI (1900), CXXV (1906) and CXXXII (1907)—CXXXIV (1908), and later as a separate set of volumes. They present in great detail and with disarming frankness the impressions of a Russian nationalist of the first two years of independent Bulgaria. The intense hatred of all that is not Slavic, and especially of Austrian influence, is made perfectly clear. A statement of the Russian case during the last year of their preponderance in Sofia is made by General Sobolev. His memoirs, which consist largely of an attack on the prince and on his Conservative advisers, appeared first in Germany (Leipzig, 1884), and later in

## Bibliographical Essay

the *Russkaya starina*, LI (1886). Partly in answer to Sobolev, and partly in defense of his own policy, General Ehrenroth published a briefer account in the same periodical, LII (1886).

A more detailed description of the regime of Sobolev and Kaulbars is given by A. N. Shcheglov, Sobolev's brother-in-law and secretary, in the *Istoricheskiĭ vĕstnik*, CXXVI (1911). The work of V. A. Cherkasskiĭ, A. M. Dondukov-Korsakov and A. D. Stolypin in setting up the Bulgarian administrative system is reviewed by N. R. Ovsyanyiĭ in his volume on *The Near East and Slavdom* (St. Petersburg, 1913). D. G. Anuchin goes into the details of Cherkasskiĭ's policy in a long series of articles in the *Russkaya starina*, LXXXIII (1895)—LXXXVII (1896), and Count Ignatiev's share in Bulgaria's liberation has been re-examined recently by D. Īotsov (Sofia, 1939), using new materials from the Count's private archives in Kiev. Giers' part in the formulation of Russia's Bulgarian policy is treated in the able biography by A. von Erdmann (Tilsit, 1935). Certainly the most vivid and outspoken description of political life in the Sofia of Battenberg's reign is to be found in the *Bulgarian diary, 1879-1884* (2 vols.; Sofia, 1930-32) of the Czech scholar Jireček. The reactions of a cultured and sympathetic Austrian to Bulgaria's first attempts at self-government are set forth with all the detail and color of an artistic and rather sensitive pen. But while a great deal is said about the conflicting interests of the powers and the personal inclinations of the prince, there is little information on the strictly constitutional issues. There is an interesting account of Jireček's life by V. Jagić in the first volume of the *Neue Österreichische Biographie, 1815-1918* (9 vols.; Vienna, 1923-35). Finally, mention should be made of the bulky but essentially uninformed *Souvenirs* (Paris, 1910) of Eumène Queillé, the French financier.

While no attempt can be made here to discuss the bibliography of the Bulgarian renaissance, a number of items should be mentioned which deal with the particular problems which are of interest to the present study. N. Atanasov's small volume on *The social factor in our cultural and literary life* (Sofia, 1910) emphasizes the vital role of the artisan as the back-bone of the renaissance. In a similar fashion Iv. Minkov, in his article on "The historic roots of our democratic traditions," in the *Filosofski pregled*, IX (1937), traces the origins of the democratic spirit in Bulgaria back to the beginnings of

## Appendices

the struggle for economic, ecclesiastical and political independence. André Girard's treatment of the same subject in his "L'évolution et les tendances actuelles de la démocratie bulgare," *Revue d'histoire politique et constitutionnelle*, II (1938), is superficial. N. Stanev, on the other hand, uses a wealth of historical evidence in his study of "The social structure of Bulgaria and the Tirnovo Constitution," in the *Bŭlgarska istoricheska biblioteka*, IV (1931), to illustrate his thesis that the nation was by no means unprepared for the responsibilities which it shouldered in 1879. S. S. Bobchev's various descriptions of the political and social position of Bulgaria in the Ottoman system, especially his articles in *Nauchen pregled*, VIII (1936) and in the *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, I (1934-35) and III (1937-38), are valuable but regrettably brief and may be supplemented by G. P. Genov's discussion of the role of the Turkish reform movement in the Bulgarian renaissance in the *Bŭlgarska istoricheska biblioteka*, IV (1931).

Owing to the great preponderance of the studies of literary history in modern Bulgarian scholarship, doubtless seeking a non-political field for its energies, the best accounts of the political thought of the Bulgarian renaissance are to be found in literary studies such as those of Arnaudov and Penev. An excellent beginning has been made, however, in the study of political and social ideas as reflected by the press. Yu. Ivanov's encyclopedic *Bulgarian periodical press, 1844-1890* (Sofia, 1893), while primarily a catalogue, is very successful in summarizing the political programs of the various newspapers. He frequently goes so far as to reproduce important editorials and statements of policy, but the essential framework is that of the chronological catalogue rather than the interpretation of ideas. Perhaps the first consistent attempt to systematize the expressions of opinion on many public questions is B. Mintses' survey of "The political, social and economic ideas in the Bulgarian pre-liberation literature," in the *Sbornik na narodni umotvoreniya, nauka i knizhnina*, XVI-XVII (1900). The most recent treatment of this subject is B. M. Andreev's volume entitled *The Bulgarian press during the renaissance* (Sofia, 1932).

The student restricted to Western languages will find a satisfactory treatment of the political ideas of the leaders of the Bulgarian renaissance in Hajek's *Bulgarien unter der Türkenherrschaft* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1925). The general background

of the intellectual aspects of the nationalist movement is described in P. Nikov's well-known history of the church question (Sofia, 1929), St. Chilingirov's study of the influence of the public reading rooms (Sofia, 1930) and H. Gandev's excellent recent description of the numerous influences on the climate of opinion in Bulgaria in the years between 1700 and 1860 (Sofia, 1939). The question of foreign influences on Bulgarian thought and literature has been the subject of a number of special studies. One of the most interesting of these is I. D. Shishmanov's excellent article on the "Beginnings of Russian influence in Bulgarian literature" in the *Bŭlgarski pregled*, V (1899). Russia's political influence is discussed by G. Bakalov in a series of articles in *Katorga i ssylka*, LXIII-LXXI (1930), by K. A. Pushkarevich in the *Trudy instituta slavyanovedeniya akademii nauk S.S.S.R.*, II (1934), and by B. H. Sumner in his *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880* (Oxford, 1937). Various aspects of the impact of French and other Western liberal ideas are studied by L. Iv. Dorosiev in his article in the memorial volume in honor of the late Louis Leger (Sofia, 1925), by Nikolaï Dontchev in his *Influences étrangères dans la littérature bulgare* (Sofia, 1934), and by N. Stanev in *Rodina*, I (1938-39). The importance of Constantinople as a Bulgarian cultural center before the liberation is shown in the excellent study of Nikola Nachov in the *Sbornik* of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, XIX (1925). Of a more general character are the articles of N. Milev, in the *Sbornik v chest na profesor Iv. D. Shishmanov* (Sofia, 1920), and of T. Tchitchovsky in the *Slavonic review*, VII and VIII (1929), and Yurdan Yurdanov's small volume on *Bulgarian liberalism* (Sofia, 1926). The present writer has summarized his views on certain aspects of this subject in his article on "The influence of Western political thought in Bulgaria, 1850-1885" in the *American historical review*, XLVIII (1942-43).

The economic interpretation inspired by the Marxist doctrines has influenced a number of important works. In many respects the most interesting is that of D. Blagoev which he chose to call *A contribution to the history of socialism in Bulgaria* (Sofia, 1906). Actually, it is a history of Bulgaria from the earliest times with special emphasis on the economic background of political events. While one may dispute the rigid framework of economic determinism, one cannot overlook the

wealth of detail and the consistent interpretation of political ideas as a synthesis of the internal struggle and of the foreign influences. While Ivan Sakázov's *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929) gives a sound description of the economic development in the traditional manner, Natan's recent *Economic history of Bulgaria* (2 vols.; Sofia, 1938) provides an up-to-date account of the economic factors and at the same time points out their effect on the political system. In effect, Natan gives a scholarly, well-documented and thought-provoking interpretation along lines strikingly similar to those of Blagoev. Before using Natan's volumes, however, Ivan Kinkel's careful critical review in the *Spisanie* of the Bulgarian Economic Society, XXXVII (1938), should be consulted. Special aspects of the economic problem are treated by Kalpakschieff (Greifswald, 1900), Petkoff (Erlangen, 1906), and Klincharov (2 vols.; Sofia, 1926-28).

The historiography of the Tirново Constitution dates from the turn of the century, and the scholarly monographs are confined almost entirely to the study of the text of the constitution itself and of the circumstances of its adoption. Matvëev's *Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin* (St. Petersburg, 1887) treated some of the aspects of this problem, and in the 1890's there was considerable discussion of the application of various clauses of the fundamental law. But it was not until after the twenty-fifth anniversary of the constitution, in 1904, that the sources were brought to light. In that year the periodical *Grazhdanin* published a jubilee edition which contained the memoirs of fifteen of the participants in the Constitutional Assembly. In the following year the Bulgarian government published a set of Russian materials entitled *Documents on the activity of the civil government in Bulgaria*. While the present writer was unable to obtain copies of these two works, they have been used in great detail in other monographs. The first use to be made of these materials was by P. Milyukov in his study entitled *The Bulgarian constitution* (Salonica, 1905). While his treatment of the constitution has been superseded, Milyukov's volume is still interesting for its discussion of the party system and of the constitutional policy of King Ferdinand. Between the years 1903 and 1907 a great deal of new information was made available by the publication in St. Petersburg of a six-volume *Collection of materials concerning*

*the civil government and the occupation of Bulgaria.* This new material was summarized by Professor S. Balamezov in 1919 in his volume on *Our constitution and our parliamentarianism.*

Professor Balamezov's book provides an able synthesis of the facts as they were known at the time, and it would doubtless have become a landmark had it not been superseded in turn three years later by E. D. Grimm's exhaustive and indispensable study of "The history and the ideological basis of the draft Organic Statute," in the *Godishnik* of the Faculty of Law of the University of Sofia, XVII (1920-21), which was based on hitherto unavailable sources. Until the appearance of Grimm's article, great confusion had reigned as to the respective influence of the Russian provisional government in Bulgaria, the imperial government in St. Petersburg and the Bulgarians whom Dondukov had consulted, in drawing up the Organic Statute which was presented to the Constitutional Assembly in 1879. The discovery of the original draft of the Organic Statute in 1921, with superimposed corrections, permitted Grimm to clear up the question of Russia's role in the elaboration of the constitution. With the solution of this problem as a starting point, Grimm proceeded with the aid of all other available materials to present a very able exposition of the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the constitution and of the motives of the various persons and groups involved. The chief conclusions reached by Grimm are that it was the sincere desire of Russian policy to set up an independent and workable form of government in Bulgaria, that the Russian draft was inspired by the Serbian constitution but was by no means a slavish copy of it, and that the Belgian constitution exerted only a slight influence. Since the publication of Grimm's article no new study of the constitutional text has been attempted, and it was used in the present study as the basis of the chapter on the preparation of the Organic Statute.

In addition to these items, a large body of legal literature has grown up during the past generation which passes for constitutional history but which in fact consists merely of a statement of the principles of the Tirnovo Constitution followed by a summary of the standard French and German legal textbooks. On the problem of ministerial responsibility, for example, the relevant articles of the constitution are quoted, but no attempt is made to examine the specific instances so as to determine to

what extent the Bulgarian practice has followed the constitutional theory. Instead, it is regarded as sufficient simply to quote the theory as expounded by the legal authorities of Western Europe. For this reason, while there is a large number of dissertations and monographs which deal with constitutional subject matter, these studies are of little value except as surveys of the standard textbooks in the fields of their respective topics. The following is a representative selection of this type of monograph. The impressiveness of the titles is rivaled only by the shallowness of the treatment: Georges D. Sariivanoff, *La Bulgarie est-elle d'après le traité de Berlin du 13 juillet 1878 un état mi-souverain?* (Paris, 1878), Charalamby Angelow, *Das bulgarische Staatsrecht im allgemeinen, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Volksvertretung* (Freiburg, 1896), Nikola Wultscheff, *Die verfassungsrechtlichen Befugnisse der bulgarischen Sobranje auf Grund der Konstitution von Tirnovo 1879* (Greifswald, 1904), K. M. Sarafow, *Die Volksvertretung in Bulgarien* (Halle, 1905), Peter Schischkoff, *Aufbau des bulgarischen Staates* (Leipzig, 1928), Slawtscho Metscheff, *Grundzüge des bulgarischen Verfassungsrechts* (Göttingen, 1929), Nikola Handjief, *Organization der Staats- und Selbstverwaltung in Bulgarien* (München, 1931), and Mosche M. Guéron, *Die Volksvertretung in Bulgarien* (Leipzig, 1934).

With the exception of Milyukov's *Bulgarian constitution*, therefore, and a restricted number of short articles by Professor Balamezov, no attempts have been made at a critical analysis of Bulgarian constitutional practice. With regard to the theoretical treatments of the subject, the most recent and comprehensive textbook is S. Balamezov's *Comparative and Bulgarian constitutional law* (2 vols.; 2nd ed., Sofia, 1938), which includes a useful summary of the historiography of the Tirnovo Constitution. The same scholar has also written a large number of briefer studies and articles in this field. The volumes by Kirov (Sofia, 1920) and Zlatanoff (Paris, 1926) are useful, though somewhat less comprehensive in scope. For a brief summary of Grimm's study, and for a discussion of the subsequent amendments to the constitution in 1893 and 1911, Professor L. Vladikin's *History of the Tirnovo Constitution* (Sofia, 1936) is useful, although it is primarily a popular account. It likewise suffers from a careful avoidance of the questions of constitutional practice. The part played by the Russians in the draw-



## Bibliographical Essay

ing-up of the Constitution of 1879 is summarized by Petko Stainov in the *Revue d'histoire politique et constitutionnelle*, II (1938). A comprehensive and detailed description of the organs of government as they existed at the time of the World War is given in A. Girginov's *Structure of the Bulgarian government* (Sofia, 1921).

Finally, a number of the leading contemporary newspapers were consulted at the Bulgarian National Library. The Conservative point of view is represented by the *Voice of Bulgaria* (1880-83), their chief organ, and by the *Maritsa* (1878-85), which was published in Eastern Rumelia and which was predominantly moderate in its point of view. For a few months in 1883 the *Balkan* was published as the organ of the Russian generals. The Liberals were more active than their opponents in the field of political journalism, and the following newspapers represent their leading tendencies: the *Tirново Integral Bulgaria* (1879-80), the *Sliven Bulgarian Banner* (1879), the two editions of the *Independence* (1880-81, 1881-82), of which the first was published in Sofia and the second in Philippopolis, and the *Tirново Constitution* (1882-84). The non-partisan and semi-official *La Bulgarie* (1882-84) was published in Sofia, but it avoids the main issues of the constitutional struggle. The chief value of the political press is the editorials and the special articles, which treat all the controversial questions of the period. Of the foreign press, the *London Times* and the *Vienna Neue Freie Presse* were consulted for the events of 1881. The main trends in the Russian press are ably reviewed in I. Grüning's study (Berlin, 1929).

These are the chief materials: sources, general works, biographies and memoirs, special studies, articles and newspapers, which were consulted in preparing this monograph. On the whole, the subject matter is adequately covered, but on certain topics the information is relatively slight. Had the bulk of Alexander of Battenberg's private papers not been destroyed, they would undoubtedly have given us a great deal more insight into his personal views. With the exception of Stoilov, Ikonov and Petko Karavelov, we have very little detailed information concerning the views and opinions of the Bulgarian leaders. There is reason to hope, however, that in the not too distant future the private papers of both Karavelov and Stambolov will be thrown open to the public. The Bul-

## *Appendices*

garian state and diplomatic documents for this period have never been published, and have been consulted only in part by Radev. The same is true of the archives of the various departments of the Russian government. While they have been consulted by Skazkin and Grimm, both scholars hint at the availability of a great deal more interesting material. The Turkish archives are likewise unexplored, and the reports of the Turkish officials before the liberation would certainly offer a vast new field for study. But, in spite of these gaps, the information on the conflicting forces during this period of constitutional struggle is quite adequate, and the access to new sources would in all probability add to the detail without changing the main lines of the interpretation.

# THE BULGARIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1879<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER I. REGARDING THE TERRITORY OF THE PRINCIPALITY

*Article 1.* The territorial limits of the principality of Bulgaria may neither be extended nor diminished without the consent of the Grand National Assembly.

*Article 2.* Rectifications of the frontier, if they regard uninhabited districts, may be made by the ordinary National Assembly (see Article 85).

*Article 3.* The territory is divided, for administrative purposes, into counties, districts and parishes. The organization of this administrative division on the basis of parochial autonomy will be determined by special legislation.

## CHAPTER II. THE PRINCE'S AUTHORITY AND ITS LIMITS

*Article 4.* The principality of Bulgaria is a hereditary and a constitutional monarchy, with a national representation.

*Article 5.* The prince is the chief representative of the state.

*Article 6.* The prince of Bulgaria bears the title of Excellency; the heir-apparent that of Serenity.

*Article 7.* The prince of Bulgaria may not simultaneously rule over any other state without the consent of the Grand National Assembly.

*Article 8.* The person of the prince is sacred and inviolable.

*Article 9.* The legislative power resides in the prince and in the national representation.

*Article 10.* The prince confirms and publishes the laws which have been passed by the National Assembly.

*Article 11.* The prince is commander-in-chief of all the military forces of the principality alike in time of peace and in time of war. He confers military rank and office in accordance with

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Papers*, LXXX (1879), "Turkey, No. 8, *Constitution of the Principality of Bulgaria*"; a considerable number of revisions have been made in the British translation, which was apparently done in great haste.

the law. Every one who enters military service must take an oath of fidelity to the prince.

*Article 12.* The executive power is vested in the prince. All organs of this power act in his name, and in virtue of his order.

*Article 13.* The judicial power, in its entirety, belongs to the persons and legal tribunals that act in the name of the prince. The relative positions of the prince and of the tribunals and persons referred to will be determined by special regulations.

*Article 14.* The prince has the right of modifying or commuting sentences according to the law of criminal procedure.

*Article 15.* The prince enjoys the right of pardon in criminal cases, but the right of amnesty belongs to him conjointly with the National Assembly.

*Article 16.* The prince's rights, as expressed in Articles 14 and 15, do not extend to the sentences of ministers condemned for violation of the constitution.

*Article 17.* The prince represents the principality in all its relations with foreign states. In his name, and with the approval of the National Assembly, special conventions may be made with the neighboring states regarding matters dependent on the administration of the principality, and for which the reciprocal action of the governments in question is required.

*Article 18.* Ordinances and regulations emanating from the prince have force only after being countersigned by the appropriate ministers, who assume the entire responsibility for them.

### CHAPTER III. THE PRINCE'S RESIDENCE

*Article 19.* The prince is bound to permanent residence within the principality. Should he absent himself, he must name a substitute for the period of his absence, who shall be invested with rights and duties determined by special legislation. Before quitting the principality and appointing a substitute he must give public notice by proclamation.

*Article 20.* The heir-apparent is similarly bound to reside within the principality, which he may only leave with the consent of the prince.

### CHAPTER IV. THE ARMS, SEAL, AND BANNER OF THE PRINCIPALITY

*Article 21.* The arms of Bulgaria are a gold lion, crowned, on a dark red shield; above the shield, a princely crown.

## The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879

*Article 22.* The seal of state bears the arms of the principality as device.

*Article 23.* The national banner of Bulgaria is tricolor, white, green, and red, arranged horizontally.

### CHAPTER V. THE LAW OF SUCCESSION TO THE PRINCEDOM

*Article 24.* The dignity of prince is hereditary in his eldest male descendant. The succession shall be regulated by a special law.

### CHAPTER VI. THE PRINCE'S COMING OF AGE, REGENCY, AND GUARDIANS

*Article 25.* The reigning prince, or heir-apparent, is considered to be of age at eighteen years.

*Article 26.* Should the prince succeed to the throne before coming of age, a regency or guardianship is appointed until his majority.

*Article 27.* The regency is composed of three regents, elected by the Grand National Assembly.

*Article 28.* The reigning prince has the right of nominating the three regents during his own lifetime, if the heir-apparent is under age; but, for such nominations to have effect, the consent and the confirmation of the Grand National Assembly are requisite.

*Article 29.* Ministers, the presidents and members of the court of cassation, or those who have filled the above-named offices without reproach, may be nominated as members of the regency.

*Article 30.* The members of the regency, when entering on their charge, must swear fidelity to the prince and the constitution in the presence of the Grand National Assembly. After this they will notify the nation by proclamation that they have undertaken the government of the principality within the limits of the authority of the prince, and in his name.

*Article 31.* The prince, on coming of age, takes on himself the government of the principality, after taking the oath and giving notice by public proclamation.

*Article 32.* The education of the prince while a minor, and the management of his property, are entrusted to the dowager

## Appendices

princess and to guardians nominated by the ministerial council, with the consent of the princess.

*Article 33.* The members of the regency cannot at the same time be the personal guardians of the prince minor.

### CHAPTER VII. THE PRINCE'S ACCESSION AND OATH

*Article 34.* On the death of the prince the heir-apparent assumes the crown and immediately convokes the Grand National Assembly, before which he takes oath as follows:

"I swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will religiously and constantly maintain the constitution and the laws of the principality, and that in all my administration I will keep singly in view the welfare and the prosperity of the principality. So help me God!"

### CHAPTER VIII. THE CIVIL LIST OF THE PRINCE AND OF HIS COURT

*Article 35.* The National Assembly assigns, for the maintenance of the prince and of his court, 600,000 francs yearly. This sum cannot be augmented without the consent of the National Assembly, nor diminished without that of the prince.

*Article 36.* The National Assembly determines the civil list of the heir-apparent, on his coming of age.

### CHAPTER IX. RELIGION

*Article 37.* The state religion of the principality of Bulgaria is the Eastern Orthodox confession.

*Article 38.* The prince of Bulgaria and his descendants are restricted to the exclusive profession of the Orthodox religion, but the first elected prince of Bulgaria may, exceptionally, profess his original religion.

*Article 39.* The principality of Bulgaria as, from an ecclesiastical point of view, forming an inseparable part of the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian church, is subject to the Holy Synod, which is the highest spiritual authority in the Bulgarian church, wherever that may exist. Through the same authority the principality remains united with the oecumenical Eastern church in matters regarding dogma and faith.

*Article 40.* Christians of other than the Orthodox faith, and

## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

those professing any other religion whatever, whether Bulgarian-born subjects or naturalized, as well as foreigners permanently or temporarily domiciled in Bulgaria, have full liberty to profess their religion so long as the performance of their rites does not violate the existing laws.

*Article 41.* No one can, under pretext of religious scruples, exempt himself from conformity with the general laws which are binding on all in common.

*Article 42.* The ecclesiastical affairs of non-Orthodox Christians, and of non-Christians generally, are managed by their own ecclesiastical administration subject, however, to the ultimate superintendence of the competent minister, according to the special laws to be promulgated in this regard.

### CHAPTER X. LEGISLATION

*Article 43.* The principality of Bulgaria is governed in strict accordance with the laws enacted in the manner prescribed by the constitution.

*Article 44.* No law may be enacted, extended, modified, or annulled until it has been examined and passed by the National Assembly, which also alone has the right of its authorized interpretation.

*Article 45.* A law passed by the National Assembly must be submitted to the prince for confirmation.

*Article 46.* After a law has been confirmed by the prince it must be promulgated in full, and in promulgation distinct mention must be made that the law has been approved by the National Assembly. No law is valid or enforceable till after such promulgation.

*Article 47.* If the principality is threatened by an imminent danger from without or within, and it be at the same time impossible to convene the National Assembly, the prince may, solely under such circumstances, on the advice of the ministerial council and on the collective responsibility of the ministers, issue ordinances and make dispositions having the force of law. But such ordinances and dispositions must be subsequently submitted to the approval of the first National Assembly convened, in order to retain force.

*Article 48.* Ordinances of the kind above stated (*Article 47*) may in no case regard the imposition of taxes or other dues

## Appendices

within the principality, which can only be affected after the sanction of the National Assembly.

*Article 49.* The National Assembly alone has the right of determining whether the conditions imposed by this constitution have been duly observed before the proclamation of any given law.

*Article 50.* The ordinances by which a law is actually given force, and the measures necessary to that effect, depend on the executive.

### CHAPTER XI. STATE PROPERTY

*Article 51.* All state property belongs to the principality of Bulgaria, and neither the prince nor his relatives can derive any personal profit from it.

*Article 52.* The manner after which state property can be alienated or mortgaged, as also the management of the proceeds derived from it, will be determined by law.

*Article 53.* State property is under the management of the competent minister.

### CHAPTER XII. THE SUBJECTS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF BULGARIA

#### *Section 1. General Regulations*

*Article 54.* All those born in Bulgaria, and who have not adopted any other nationality, as also the children of Bulgarian subjects, born outside the principality, are regarded as subjects of the principality of Bulgaria.

*Article 55.* Foreigners can, at their own request, be admitted to Bulgarian citizenship, but the assent of the National Assembly is requisite for that purpose.

*Article 56.* Any subject of the principality may give up his citizenship after having completed his military service, and discharged his remaining obligations towards the principality, according to special law to be enacted for this matter.

*Article 57.* All Bulgarian subjects are equal before the law. There exists no privileged class in Bulgaria.

*Article 58.* Titles of nobility or rank, as well as orders and decorations, cannot exist within the principality of Bulgaria.

*Article 59.* The prince, however, enjoys the right of founding a recognized mark of distinction for the military on active service.



## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

*Article 60.* Subjects of the principality alone have the enjoyment of its political rights, but all residents whatever within the principality share its civil rights, according to the law.

*Article 61.* No one can buy or sell slaves within the limits of the Bulgarian principality. Any slave of either sex, and of whatever religion or nationality, becomes free upon setting foot on Bulgarian soil.

*Article 62.* Laws concerning public order and police regulations are binding on all who reside within the principality.

*Article 63.* All real property within the principality, not excepting that held by foreigners, is subject to the action of Bulgarian law.

*Article 64.* In every other respect the condition of foreign subjects resident in Bulgaria is defined by special law.

### *Section 2. Public Service*

*Article 65.* Bulgarian subjects only may hold office, civil or military, in the public service.

*Article 66.* Foreign subjects may also be employed in the public service, but for each separate appointment the approval of the National Assembly is required.

### *Section 3. Rights of Property*

*Article 67.* The rights of property are inviolable.

*Article 68.* Cession of property may only be obligatory when required for the public advantage or for state purposes, and then only in accordance with equity, and after the payment of compensation. The manner in which such cession is effected will be determined by special legislation.

### *Section 4. State Taxes and Dues*

*Article 69.* Every subject of the principality of Bulgaria, without exception, must pay the state taxes and dues determined by law, and bear the fines imposed on default.

*Article 70.* The reigning prince and the heir-apparent are exempt from all taxes, state dues, and fines.

### *Section 5. Military Service*

*Article 71.* Every subject of the principality is obligated to military service, according to the law to that effect.

## *Appendices*

*Article 72.* Military persons can be tried for criminal offences in military courts only when they are on active service.

### *Section 6. Rights of Person, Domicile, and Correspondence*

*Article 73.* No one can be punished without having previously been sentenced by a competent court, having legal authority.

*Article 74.* No person can be imprisoned, and no house searched, except under the conditions provided by law.

*Article 75.* No one can be subjected to any form of punishment except such as is specified by law. Torture and confiscation of goods may not be inflicted for any crime whatsoever.

*Article 76.* Should disturbances occur of a character to endanger the public safety, the prince may suspend the action of Articles 73 and 74 within particular districts, and even throughout the whole principality, but he can only do this under condition of submitting his decrees to that effect to the approval of the first National Assembly convoked afterwards.

*Article 77.* Private letters and telegrams are secret and inviolable. A special law will determine the responsibility of those to whom letters and telegrams are confided.

### *Section 7. National Education*

*Article 78.* Primary education is gratuitous and obligatory for all subjects of the principality of Bulgaria.

### *Section 8. Freedom of the Press*

*Article 79.* The press is free. No censorship may be instituted, and no caution may be required from authors, editors, or publishers. If the author be well known and resides within the principality no action may be brought against the editor, the publisher, or the salesman.

*Article 80.* The Holy Scripture, prayerbooks, and catechisms destined for use in the churches of the Orthodox rite, as also treatises of ecclesiastical law destined for use in Orthodox schools, must be submitted for the approval of the Holy Synod.

*Article 81.* Offences in whatever concerns the press can only be tried under the law and by the ordinary courts.

### *Section 9. Freedom of Assembly and of Association*

*Article 82.* Subjects of the Bulgarian principality have the right of meeting together, peaceably and without arms, to dis-

## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

cuss any topic whatever, without requiring any previous permission to that effect. Public meetings held in the open air are subject to the ordinary police regulations.

*Article 83.* Bulgarian subjects have the right of forming associations without any previous authorization, on condition that the object pursued, and the means employed, by these associations be not prejudicial to public order, religion, or good morals.

### *Section 10. Right of Presenting Petitions*

*Article 84.* Every Bulgarian subject has the right of presenting petitions to the several authorities, signed either by one person or by several collectively. Legally established corporations have the right of presenting petitions through their representatives.

## CHAPTER XIII. NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

*Article 85.* Representation in the principality of Bulgaria is expressed by the National Assembly which is either (1) Ordinary, or (2) Grand.

## CHAPTER XIV. THE ORDINARY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### *Section 1. Composition of the Ordinary National Assembly*

*Article 86.* The ordinary National Assembly is composed of deputies, chosen by direct popular election, in the proportion of one representative for 10,000 individuals of both sexes. The deputies are chosen for a term of three years. The electors are all Bulgarian subjects over twenty-one years of age, and in the enjoyment of civil and political rights. Any Bulgarian subject who enjoys civil and political rights, is over thirty years of age, and can read and write, is eligible for election. A special electoral law will determine the procedure of the elections.

*Article 87.* Deputies do not represent merely their own electors, but the entire nation. Hence they may not accept as binding on them any instructions received from their own electors. The deputies have full liberty to take into consideration whatever may regard Bulgaria, each according to his own conscience and conviction.

*Article 88.* Immediately on the opening of the session the National Assembly, under the direction of the senior member

## Appendices

present, at once proceeds to elect a president and vice-presidents.

*Article 89.* The National Assembly chooses from among its members as many secretaries as the business of the Assembly may require.

*Article 90.* Ministers may be present at the sittings of the Assembly, and may take part in the debates. The Assembly is bound to listen to the ministers whenever they desire to speak.

*Article 91.* The prince can, in place of the ministers, or conjointly with them, name special commissioners, charged to give the Assembly information regarding the projects and bills before it. In such cases the commissioners possess the same rights as those assigned to the ministers in Article 90 above.

*Article 92.* The Assembly has power to summon the ministers and commissioners to present themselves at a sitting, in order that they may supply necessary information or explanations. Ministers and commissioners are in such cases obliged to present themselves at the Assembly, and to give in person the information required of them. But ministers and commissioners may, on their own responsibility, refuse to communicate any particular circumstance which, if made public at the time, might be prejudicial to the interests of the state.

### *Section 2. Liberty of Opinion and Immunities of the Members of the Assembly*

*Article 93.* Every member of the Assembly has the right of freely stating his opinions, and of voting according to his own conviction and conscience. No one can call a member to account, or in any way prosecute him, for the opinions he may have expressed.

*Article 94.* The authority of the president, and the obligations imposed on the members of the Assembly in regard to good order and decorum during the sittings, are determined by special regulations regarding the order of the house.

*Article 95.* Should any member of the Assembly commit during the session any crime or act of violence provided against in the criminal code, the culprit can be handed over to justice, but only by order of the Assembly itself.

*Article 96.* Members of the National Assembly may not, for the five days previous to the opening of the session, and during the whole of its duration, be imprisoned or tried except for

such crimes as, according to the criminal code, receive the very heaviest punishments. Should this occur, the incarceration of the accused must be immediately notified to the National Assembly, and by its permission alone can trial take place.

*Article 97.* Deputies, for the five days previous to the opening of the session, and during the whole of its duration, cannot be imprisoned for debt.

*Article 98.* The manner of filling vacancies occasioned by the death of members or otherwise is determined by an electoral law.

*Section 3. The Publicity of the Sitzings of the  
National Assembly*

*Article 99.* Sitzings of the National Assembly are open to the public.

*Article 100.* The president, a minister, a commissioner, and any number of members not less than three, may propose that the public be excluded from a sitting of the Assembly. The proposal will be discussed behind closed doors, and the decision will be by a majority of those present.

*Article 101.* The decision of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 100, will be announced by the president at a public sitting.

*Article 102.* No one may be permitted to enter the room where a sitting is being held bearing arms, or to bear them within the building where the Assembly meets. Neither military sentinels nor any armed force whatever may be posted either at the door of the Assembly room, or before the building of which it is a part, or even in the neighborhood of the building, except at the demand of a majority of the Assembly itself.

*Article 103.* The Assembly has its own police force, under the orders of the president.

*Article 104.* The Assembly provides for its own internal order, and determines the manner of its own proceedings.

CHAPTER XV. BUSINESS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

*Article 105.* The business of the National Assembly is:

- (1) To consider all projects of legislation according to Article 44.
- (2) To consider all proposals for state loans, for the increase,

- diminution, or imposition of all taxes or duties, as also their application and the manner of their collection.
- (3) To remit arrears of taxes and duties when circumstances render their collection inconvenient.
  - (4) To examine the yearly state budget of revenue and expenditure.
  - (5) To verify the accounts of the several expenditures noted in the budget.
  - (6) To examine and verify the reports of the chamber of accounts, which is required to present to the Assembly detailed information concerning the budget.
  - (7) To initiate inquiries into matters concerning ministerial responsibility.

*Article 106.* The Assembly has the right of receiving all petitions and complaints, and of transmitting them to the ministers concerned. It has also the right of nominating committees of inquiry into the administration. Ministers, if questioned by the Assembly, are required to make answer regarding the matter inquired into.

*Article 107.* Members of the Assembly have the right of putting questions to the government, and the ministers whom such questions concern are obliged to answer accordingly.

#### CHAPTER XVI. ON THE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROJECTS AND BILLS

*Article 108.* The initiative in legislation belongs to the prince and the National Assembly.

*Article 109.* Programs of laws and bills for administrative objects are submitted to the National Assembly, at the prince's order, by the ministers concerned. Also, any member may submit to the National Assembly the program of a law, or a bill, if it is supported by one-fourth of the members present.

*Article 110.* Any program of a law or bill which has been submitted to the National Assembly may be withdrawn if it has not yet been made the subject of a regular vote.

*Article 111.* The National Assembly may modify, amend, or correct the bills submitted to it.

*Article 112.* If the government does not approve of the modifications, amendments, or corrections made in its bill, it may either withdraw it altogether, or submit it a second time in its

original form but with explanation and comment or, finally, submit it with such modifications or amendments as it finds proper.

*Article 113.* No program of law that has once been absolutely rejected by the Assembly may be submitted a second time unchanged during the course of the same session, but the same program may be submitted in another session.

*Article 114.* Voting on a program of law or bill laid for discussion before the Assembly may only take place if more than one-half the members of the Assembly are present at the sitting.

*Article 115.* The members of the Assembly will vote in person, in public, and by voice. But the voting may be secret if not less than ten members present desire it so.

*Article 116.* The Assembly decides by a majority of votes among its members.

*Article 117.* Should it happen that a program or bill submitted to the Assembly has the votes of half the members, while the other half vote against it, the program or bill is lost.

*Article 118.* The sanction of the prince must be given before the close of the session to every bill passed in the Assembly and presented to him.

#### CHAPTER XVII. THE BUDGET

*Article 119.* The budget must be submitted annually for examination by the National Assembly.

*Article 120.* After the budget has been voted by the National Assembly it must be presented to the prince for his confirmation.

*Article 121.* The National Assembly will discuss the budget submitted to it, article by article. If it changes or rejects any of them it must state the reasons which lead it to do so.

*Article 122.* Should an immediate necessity of expenditure, not admitting of delay, occur at a time when the National Assembly cannot be convened, the budget of the preceding year will remain in force, on the responsibility of the ministers, until the measures taken by them can be sanctioned by the National Assembly in the first session after its meeting.

#### CHAPTER XVIII. STATE LOANS

*Article 123.* No loan may be raised without the consent of the National Assembly.

*Article 124.* Should it be necessary to raise a loan for the state on account of extraordinary expenditure which must be met without delay after the close of the sittings of the Assembly, the National Assembly must be convoked immediately.

*Article 125.* Should any unsurmountable obstacle prevent the convocation of the National Assembly the prince may, on the request of the ministerial council, decree a loan up to 1,000,000 francs under the obligation of having it sanctioned by the first Assembly that shall be convoked.

*Article 126.* For objects towards which a loan is not required the prince may, under the conditions and in the circumstances specified in the preceding Article 125, decree expenditure to be made from the public treasury, but such expenditure must not exceed the sum of 300,000 francs.

#### CHAPTER XIX. CONVOCATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

*Article 127.* The prince convokes the National Assembly once every year. The session lasts from October 15th to December 15th but, for urgent reasons, the Assembly may be convoked for any time of the year.

*Article 128.* The place and (as has been stated in Article 127) the time of convocation are stated in the summons issued by the prince for that purpose.

*Article 129.* The ordinary sessions of the Assembly may be prolonged by the mutual agreement of the prince and the Assembly itself.

*Article 130.* The prince opens and closes the Assembly, either in person or through some other person to whom he delegates his authority for that purpose.

*Article 131.* Before the opening of the Assembly, all the members, at the same time, and each one in a manner agreeable to his creed, take oath as follows:

“I swear, in the name of Almighty God, to maintain and defend the constitution and, in the performance of my duties in this Assembly, to have always and singly in view the welfare of the people and the prince, according to my conscience and the best of my knowledge. So help me God. Amen.”

*Article 132.* Clergymen do not take oath, but they solemnly



## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

promise to do their duty to the best of their ability according to their conscience, having solely in view the welfare of the people and the prince.

*Article 133.* At the opening of the Assembly the prince's speech gives a general view of the condition of the principality and recapitulates the programs of laws and bills which will be submitted to discussion in the Assembly.

*Article 134.* The Assembly answers the prince's speech in an address.

*Article 135.* The prince, after having convoked the Assembly, may prorogue the commencement of the sittings, but not for a term exceeding two months. No fresh adjournment can take place during the same session except with the consent of the Assembly.

*Article 136.* The prince can dissolve the Assembly, and order new elections of national deputies.

*Article 137.* The new elections must take place within a term of two months at most, and the new Assembly must be opened within a term of four months at most, dating from the dissolution of the preceding Assembly.

*Article 138.* The members of the National Assembly cannot form themselves into a session without being summoned by the prince, nor can they unite to hold sessions after the adjournment, close, or dissolution of the Assembly.

*Article 139.* Such members of the National Assembly as do not reside at the place where the Assembly holds its sittings receive, besides their daily allowance, reimbursement for all their travelling expenses. The limit of permitted expenditure will be determined by special ordinance.

### CHAPTER XX. THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

#### *Section 1. Business of the Grand National Assembly*

*Article 140.* The Grand National Assembly may be convoked by the Prince, by the regency, or by the ministerial council.

*Article 141.* The prince may convoke the Grand National Assembly for the following objects:

- (1) To pronounce on matters regarding the cession or exchange of any part of the territory of the principality.

## Appendices

Questions of this nature may be decided only by a majority of members in the Assembly.

- (2) To change or modify the constitution. An affirmative decision requires a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members in the Assembly.

*Article 142.* The Grand National Assembly may be convoked by the regency solely for the purpose of discussing matters in connection with the cession or exchange of some part of the territory of the principality. Matters of this nature may be decided in the affirmative by the simple majority of the members in the Assembly.

*Article 143.* The ministerial council may convoke the Grand National Assembly:

- (1) For the election of a new prince, should the last reigning one have died without succession. The election requires a majority of two-thirds of the votes of the members in the Assembly.
- (2) For the election of regents, should the heir-apparent be under age. This election is decided by a simple majority by the members in the Assembly.

### *Section 2. Composition of the Grand National Assembly.*

*Article 144.* The Grand National Assembly is composed of representatives chosen by direct popular election. The number of these representatives is exactly double the number of the members of the ordinary National Assembly, and is composed of two representatives for every 10,000 inhabitants of both sexes. The manner of election will be explained in a special electoral law.

*Article 145.* The Assembly elects its own president, vice-presidents, and the requisite number of secretaries, from among its own members. Before such election has been made, the eldest of the members of the Assembly will preside.

*Article 146.* The Grand National Assembly may discuss only those topics (Articles 141, 142, 143) for which it may have been convoked, according to the constitution. As soon as these are decided, it is of itself dissolved.

*Article 147.* Articles 87, 90, 92, 93-104, 114, 115, 131 and 132 of this constitution concern the Grand National Assembly.

## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

### CHAPTER XXI. THE CHIEF ORGANS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL AND THE MINISTRIES

*Article 148.* The chief organs of the administration are:

- (1) The ministerial council.
- (2) The ministries.

*Article 149.* The executive authority, under the high superintendence and direction of the prince (Article 12), is vested in the ministers and in their council.

*Article 150.* The ministerial council is composed of all the ministers. One of them, at the choice of the prince, is nominated president of the council.

*Article 151.* In addition to its ordinary duties during the regular course of affairs, the ministerial council has special powers and duties in certain conjunctures here below enumerated, namely:

- (1) Should the prince die without succession, the ministerial council assumes the government of the principality and, within the space of a month, convokes the Grand National Assembly for the election of a new prince.
- (2) The ministerial council will also assume the government of the principality in case the prince has not appointed a regency before his death. The Grand National Assembly must, as in the former instance, be convoked within the space of a month for the election of the regents.
- (3) Should the prince, at his death, leave the dowager princess with child, the government of the principality will remain vested in the ministerial council until the child be born.
- (4) Should any one of the regents die, the ministerial council shall convoke the Grand National Assembly for the election of a new regent in place of the deceased, according to the directions in Clause 2.
- (5) In any one of the events enumerated in Clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 of this Article, the ministerial council, on assuming the government of the principality, gives public notice of its so doing by proclamation.
- (6) So long as the ministerial council governs the principality no change of ministers can take place.
- (7) The members of the ministerial council, while provisionally governing the principality, receive only their ordinary salary as ministers.

## Appendices

*Article 152.* Ministers are appointed or discharged by the prince.

*Article 153.* Ministers are responsible to the prince and to the National Assembly collectively for whatever measures they take in common, and individually for the administration of the department entrusted to him.

*Article 154.* Every official document, whatever its nature, signed by the prince, must also be signed by all the ministers, or else by the individual minister whom it specially concerns.

*Article 155.* The National Assembly can prosecute the ministers by course of law for neglect of their duties towards the country or the prince, for violation of the constitution, for high treason, or for any proceeding in which they have sacrificed the welfare of the principality to private interests.

*Article 156.* Bills for the prosecution of ministers shall be drawn up in writing, must contain all the points of accusation stated separately, and must be signed by at least one-fourth of the members of the National Assembly.

*Article 157.* The actual prosecution of a minister may only be undertaken on a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

*Article 158.* Ministers are tried by a special state court, the formation of which will be determined by a law to that effect.

*Article 159.* The prince may not grant a pardon to a minister who has been condemned without the sanction of the National Assembly.

*Article 160.* The ministries, as the highest organs of the administration, are charged with the due execution of the laws.

*Article 161.* There are six ministries:

- (1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Public Worship.
- (2) The Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- (3) The Ministry of Public Instruction.
- (4) The Ministry of Finance.
- (5) The Ministry of Justice.
- (6) The Ministry of War.

*Article 162.* At the head of each ministry is a minister.

*Article 163.* The prince has the right of appointment to all government employment.

*Article 164.* All officials shall take an oath of fidelity to the prince and to the constitution.

*Article 165.* Every official is responsible for what he does in virtue of his office.

## *The Bulgarian Constitution of 1879*

*Article 166.* Officials appointed by the government have the right to receive pensions at the rate and to the amount which shall be determined by a special law.

### CHAPTER XXII. THE MANNER OF AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

*Article 167.* Proposals for amending the constitution are made according to the procedure prescribed for the introduction of bills (Articles 108 and 109).

*Article 168.* The proposals mentioned in Article 167 are considered as adopted if more than two-thirds of all the members of the National Assembly vote in their favor.

*Article 169.* For carrying into execution proposals of the kind mentioned in Article 167 the Grand National Assembly must be convoked, which decides whatever concerns the amendment of the constitution by an affirmative majority of two-thirds of all the Assembly.



# THE STATUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE<sup>1</sup>

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*Article 1.* The council of state is composed:

- (a) of ministers of state;
- (b) of members appointed by the prince;
- (c) of members elected by the nation.

*Article 2.* In addition to these members, a bishop shall be elected by the bishops of the principality as a permanent member of the council of state.

*Article 3.* The ministers of state may attend the plenary sessions of the council of state in a consultative capacity. They may participate in the deliberations only on questions concerning their department. The ministers may not attend sessions when questions of administrative disputes are being discussed.

*Article 4.* The bishop may attend the plenary sessions of the council of state in a consultative capacity whenever he so desires. He may participate in the deliberations only on questions concerning the civil relations of the dominant cult of the principality. In this latter case, the presence of the bishop in the council of state is indispensable.

*Article 5.* Four members shall be appointed by the prince.

*Article 6.* Eight members shall be elected by the nation. Observation: In case of absolute necessity, the number of the members of the council may be augmented.

*Article 7.* The members elected by the nation shall be chosen by an indirect system of voting the details of which will be determined by a special regulation.

*Article 8.* The members eligible to the council of state must satisfy the following conditions:

- (a) they must be Bulgarian subjects or of Bulgarian parentage;
- (b) they must be at least thirty years of age;
- (c) they must have served in the principality without reproach as ministers, diplomatic agents, presidents, members, or attorneys of the court of cassation, governors, vice-gover-

<sup>1</sup> From the French version in Lascelles to Granville, F. O. 78/3310, No. 146, Sofia, October 4, 1881; the decree proclaiming this statute was issued on September 14/26, 1881.

## Appendices

- nors, or presidents of the former provincial administrative councils, or presidents of the courts of appeal;
- (d) or they must have occupied some other public position, after having completed their studies in an institution of higher learning.

*Article 9.* Of the members eligible to the council of state, the nation elects twenty candidates from among whom the prince selects eight to be members of the council of state. From the remaining twelve elected candidates, members may be selected to complete the membership of the council of state in the following cases:

- (a) when one of the elected members dies, or resigns as the result of prolonged illness;
- (b) when one of the elected members is appointed to another position.

*Article 10.* One half of the elected members are renewed every three years. The members to be renewed at the end of the first period will be decided by the drawing of lots. Retiring councillors may be reelected.

*Article 11.* The members appointed by the prince serve for a term of three years; upon the expiration of their term they may be reappointed.

*Article 12.* From among the members of the council of state appointed by the prince or elected by the people, the prince designates the president and the vice-president of the council.

*Article 13.* The president receives an annual salary of 12,000 francs; the vice-president receives 11,000 francs and each of the other members receives 10,000. Observation: the question of the salary of the bishop will be decided later.

*Article 14.* The members of the council of state may not be elected as members of the National Assembly; nor may they occupy any other salaried position either with the state or with private concerns.

*Article 15.* The members of the council of state may not resign except in case of prolonged illness.

*Article 16.* For the work of the council of state, a special chancellery will be established, under the direction of a secretary elected by the council itself and ratified by the prince.

*Article 17.* In the sessions when the council of state deliberates on questions concerning the civil relations of cults existing in the principality, with the exception of the dominant Ortho-



## *The Statute of the Council of State*

dox cult, the council of state will invite representatives of these cults to be present in a consultative capacity.

*Article 18.* For the examination of questions which require special theoretical or practical knowledge, the council of state may call upon the advice of specialists, either Bulgarian or foreign. The latter may be admitted to the sessions of the council, if it is considered necessary, in a consultative capacity.

*Article 19.* The council of state has the following functions:

- (a) to give its opinion on all questions submitted to it by the government;
- (b) to prepare and to examine all bills which, in accordance with the manifesto of July 1, 1881, may be submitted to the National Assembly;
- (c) to elaborate all of the financial bills called for by the National Assembly, and to give its opinion on all bills presented to it by this assembly;
- (d) to prepare and to examine all of the bills which the prince, in accordance with the extraordinary powers conferred upon him by the Grand National Assembly, may see fit to proclaim without submitting them to the National Assembly;
- (e) to examine all of the administrative regulations;
- (f) to solve in the last instance all questions of administrative controversies;
- (g) to solve all questions taken to court by functionaries appointed by the prince, with the exception of the members of the judiciary;
- (h) to decide in the last instance on the public welfare in questions of forced expropriation by the state or by the communes;
- (i) to pass on expenditures not foreseen in the budget, in the cases provided for by Articles 125 and 126 of the constitution;
- (j) to regulate the use of the general fund provided for in the budget for extraordinary expenditures;
- (k) to authorize loans to the provinces, to the districts and to the communes;
- (l) to control the cession by the provinces, the districts and the communes, of real estate belonging to them;
- (m) to review the reports of the chamber of accounts on the budget before they are presented to the National Assembly;

- (n) to receive and to examine the complaints received from functionaries and from private individuals, as well as from the departments of state and from public institutions, against irregularities on the part of the higher administrative authorities;
- (o) to submit to the prince all cases of violations of the fundamental laws of the principality.

*Article 20.* The functions of the council of state as well as its division into sections and, in general, all the regulations concerning its external organization, will be drawn up in greater detail by the council itself as soon as it is established. The arrangements agreed upon will be submitted for the approval of the prince.

# THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION PROPOSED IN 1883<sup>1</sup>

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*Article 6.* The prince of Bulgaria and the members of his family bear the title of Highness.

*Article 15.* Amnesty is accorded by law.

*Article 27.* The regency is composed of three persons of whom one is by law the senior male relative of the prince's family who has attained his majority and who is a Bulgarian subject, or, in absence of such, the mother of the minor prince, and two regents elected by the Grand National Assembly.

*Article 29.* Members of the prince's family, ministers, the presidents and members of the court of cassation, or those who have filled the above-named offices without reproach, may become members of the regency.

*Article 36.* The National Assembly determines the civil list of the heir-apparent on his coming of age. The National Assembly also determines the civil list of the dowager princess.

*Article 44.* No law may be enacted, extended, modified, or annulled until it has been examined and passed by the National Assembly and by the second chamber, and confirmed by the prince. The National Assembly is entrusted with the interpretation of the laws, but only by legislative means.

*Article 49.* If, after the publication of a law, the conditions of its voting, its confirmation or its enactment should be contested, the question is resolved by the courts.

*Article 53.* The state property belongs to the principality of Bulgaria. Its revenues shall accrue to the budget of the state.

*Article 54.* The procedure for acquiring or relinquishing Bulgarian citizenship shall be determined by the civil code.

*Article 57.* All Bulgarian subjects are equal before the law. Class distinctions and titles of nobility are not permitted in Bulgaria.

<sup>1</sup> From the French version in the *Archives diplomatiques, 2e série, X* (1884), 80-84; these are the amendments foreseen in the compromise between the Conservatives and the Liberals on August 8/20, 1883, and tentatively accepted by the National Assembly in its session of December 5/17, 1883.

## Appendices

Articles 58 and 59 abrogated.

*Article 81.* Offences concerning the press may be settled in the ordinary courts. The penalties for these offences shall be determined by a special law.

### CHAPTER XIII. NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

*Article 85.* The national representation in the principality of Bulgaria is both ordinary and grand:

1. The ordinary representation consists of the National Assembly and of a second chamber;
2. The Grand Assembly is formed by the joint session of the National Assembly and of the second chamber.

### CHAPTER XIV. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE SECOND CHAMBER

*Article 86.* The National Assembly is composed of deputies, chosen by direct popular election, in the proportion of one representative for 20,000 inhabitants of both sexes.

1. The deputies are chosen for a term of four years. All Bulgarian subjects twenty years of age, literate, and in the enjoyment of civil and political rights, possess the right to vote. Any Bulgarian subject, thirty years of age, and literate, is eligible for election. A special law will determine the order and method of the elections.
2. The second chamber has both administrative and legislative functions.
3. The administrative functions are exercised by a permanent commission composed of six members, appointed by the prince on the recommendation of the minister-president.
4. The administrative functions of the second chamber shall be determined by a special law.
5. The legislative functions of the second chamber are exercised by its plenary assembly. It is convoked by a special decree of the prince at the same time and for the same period as the National Assembly. The plenary sessions of the second chamber are public.
6. The second chamber is composed:
  - (a) of the six members of the permanent commission;
  - (b) of two representatives from each district, elected by

## *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution*

- the district councils and by the mayors of the communes in each district: A special law will determine the order and method of the elections;
- (c) of three representatives of the clergy, elected by the bishops of the principality under the same regulations as the elections for the Holy Synod. The representatives of the clergy are not removable.
7. The following are eligible for election to the second chamber:
- (a) all regular electors over thirty-five years of age, with an annual revenue from real property of at least 2000 francs, or with a university education;
  - (b) all those who have been elected to the National Assembly for two consecutive sessions. A deputy elected both to the National Assembly and to the second chamber must choose between his two mandates.
8. The elected members of the second chamber receive no fixed salary, but only a daily fee similar to that of the members of the National Assembly.
9. The second chamber, in its plenary assembly shall examine and vote on all bills passed by the National Assembly with the exception of the budget, which is voted by the National Assembly alone.
10. The second chamber, in its plenary assembly, possesses no legislative initiative and may examine only those laws already voted by the National Assembly and referred to it by the president of the National Assembly. It may, however, amend bills submitted to it for examination.
11. In case the second chamber should amend bills referred to it by the National Assembly, these shall be returned to the National Assembly for a second reading, and may not be presented to the prince for his confirmation until both the National Assembly and the second chamber shall have agreed upon the text.

*Article 88.* The National Assembly and the second chamber, meeting separately under the presidency of their respective senior members, shall at the beginning of each regular session, after the verification of the mandates, elect a president and two vice-presidents.

*Article 89.* The National Assembly and the second chamber

## Appendices

shall elect from among their membership as many secretaries as they shall need.

*Article 92.* The National Assembly and the second chamber may invite the ministers and commissioners to be present at their sessions for the purpose of giving necessary information and explanations. The ministers and commissioners are required to appear before the assembly or the chamber, and to give the required explanations personally. The ministers and commissioners may, on their own responsibility, refuse to answer questions which, if made public, would harm the interests of the state.

*Article 102.* No one, except for the prince and the *aides de camp* accompanying him, may bear arms in the assembly hall of the National Assembly.

*Article 106.* The National Assembly has the right of receiving all petitions and complaints, and of transmitting them to the ministers concerned. Ministers interpellated on this matter by the National Assembly are required to answer.

*Article 118.* The confirmation of the prince must be given no later than one month after the closing of the session, to bills passed by the National Assembly and by the second chamber, and presented to him.

*Article 123.* No loan may be raised unless it is voted and confirmed by the established method.

### CHAPTER XX. THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

#### *Section 2. The Composition of the Grand National Assembly*

*Article 144.* The Grand National Assembly, in the cases foreseen in the present constitution, is composed of the National Assembly and the second chamber meeting in joint session.

*Article 151.* In case that, after the death of the prince, there should be no heir and the princess should be with child, the direction of the affairs of the principality shall be entrusted to the council of ministers until the birth of the child.

*Article 160.* The execution of the laws, under the supervision of the prince, is entrusted to the administrative institutions which are known as ministries.

*Article 161.* The number of the ministries shall be determined by a special law.

## *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution*

*Article 164.* All civil officials shall take an oath of fidelity to the prince and to the constitution.

### CHAPTER XXII. THE MANNER OF AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

*Article 169.* Whenever the National Assembly and the second chamber shall find it necessary to amend the constitution, these assemblies, after deciding on the desired amendments, are dissolved and new elections are held for the National Assembly as well as for the second chamber. These two assemblies, thus renewed, constitute the Grand National Assembly which, by a two-thirds vote of its total membership, shall decide questions relative to the amendment of the constitution.





## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TRANSLITERATION OF THE BULGARIAN ALPHABET<sup>1</sup>

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No regular system has yet been generally accepted for the transliteration of the Bulgarian alphabet.<sup>2</sup> Of the Slavic languages which use the Cyrillic alphabet, it has become customary and is natural to transliterate the Serbian by the Croatian method, and the Russian by a widely accepted system worked out by the British Academy. The prerequisites for a Bulgarian system would be that it adhere as closely as possible to the accepted transliteration of Russian, emphasizing the use of easily recognizable symbols, while at the same time making the necessary concessions to the peculiarities of the Bulgarian language. The Library of Congress system, with its ' , " , îâ, fš, etc., is too unwieldy for ordinary usage and misrepresents certain letters. On the other hand, the various European international systems are inadequate because they use symbols unfamiliar to the ordinary English reader, such as C for Ц, Ć for Ч, Ž for Ж, etc. Hence, the following suggestions are made, in the form of a slightly modified version of the system ordinarily used for the Russian language.

In the case of the majority of the letters, there is no difficulty in determining the proper transliteration. These are: A, B, V, G, D, E, Z, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, U, F.

For the remaining letters, however, the various systems are

<sup>1</sup> Drawn up in June, 1939, by J. F. Clarke and C. E. Black.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mladenov, "Kirilitsa ili latinitsa" [The Cyrillic or the Latin alphabets], *Bŭlgarska kniga*, I (1930), 177-178; St. Romanski, "Latinska transkriptsija na bŭlgarskoto pismo" [The Latin transcription of the Bulgarian alphabet], *Bŭlgarski prŕegled*, I (1930), 421-424; Paul Rowland, "Transliteration of Bulgarian," *American College Bulletin* (Sofia, 1931); N. Batowski, "La translittération et la prononciation des caractères cyrilliques bulgares et serbes," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, II (1936), 317-318; see also Enrico Damiani, "Sur l'état actuel des systèmes de transcription des noms slaves cyrilliques dans la documentation bibliographique," *Transactions of the 14th Conference of the International Federation for Documentation* (Oxford, 1938), 245-248; Maro Beath Jones, *Inclusive and uni-form alphabet for Russian, Bulgarian, Serb-Croatian, Czech and Polish* (Claremont, Calif., 1941).

## Appendices

in no agreement, and the following suggestions are made for their proper transliteration into English:

- Ж – ZH This may be recommended as the most adequate English transliteration. It is widely accepted, and is more familiar than the Ž of the German scholars. Its one drawback is that in certain Bulgarian words (РАЗХОДКА) the letters Z and H appear together.
- Ї – Ī The short I, except when it appears at the end of a word (ПАИСИЇ), in which case it may be omitted, is significant in the pronunciation of many Bulgarian words and should therefore be included. Some systems advocate the plain I for all forms of Ї.
- X – H The KH used so frequently to represent the Slavic X misrepresents the pronunciation of the letter and is an unnecessary burden to the reader.
- Ц – TS This is the only convenient form for the English language. Alternative methods, such as the Croatian C and the German Z are too unfamiliar to the English reader.
- Ч – CH For ordinary English usage this is preferable to the Ć sometimes advocated for international systems.
- Ш – SH
- Щ – SHT The Library of Congress system fails to differentiate between the Russian and the Bulgarian Щ, which is a compound of SH and T.
- Ъ – Ū Pronounced as the “u” in *under* when used as a vowel; omitted when final.
- Ж – Ā The one exclusively Bulgarian letter, its pronunciation coincides with Ъ, yet it is felt that a distinction should be drawn between the two.
- Ь – This is the one letter in the Bulgarian language which is not strictly phonetical, and it is therefore recommended that it be transliterated as follows:
- Y when it occurs before a vowel, as in Piryov, aktyor;

## *Transliteration of the Alphabet*

Ū when it occurs before the article in a masculine noun, as in ЦАРЬТЪ—tsarŭt;

— omitted when final and before the article in a feminine noun, as in СКРЪБЪТА —skrŭbta.

Ѣ — Ę Although most generally pronounced as E (not ĪĒ), it must be distinguished from E, not only because it represents the chief distinction between the two principal Bulgarian dialects, but also because in the literary language it is pronounced either E or YA (Я) depending on the accent and position.

Ю — YU This conveys the pronunciation more accurately than the IU sometimes used.

Я — YA

In addition the following points may be noted:

ДЖ — This combination occurs mainly in words and geographical names of Turkish origin (ДЖЕЛЕПЪ, ДОБРУДЖА). As the logical transliteration, DZH, seems unnecessarily clumsy, it is suggested that J be used instead. Thus, jelep, Dobruja.

For certain geographical names a traditional spelling has become accepted; when such words appear in the text, but not in the transliteration of titles for bibliographical purposes, the conventional spelling may be used, as in Tirnovo, instead of Tŭrnovo, and, of course, Bulgaria instead of Bŭlgariya. Proper names ending in B should be uniformly transliterated with V.

The Church Slavic and other obsolete letters formerly used and eliminated by the 1869 and subsequent orthographic reforms may be replaced by their present equivalents.

Diacritical marks: for the sake of simplicity and uniformity, it is suggested that the inverted circumflex (˘) be used in all cases, in spite of the fact that a breve (˘) would be more conventional for the ĭ and ŭ.



## INDEX

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- Abdul Hamid, Sultan, and Russian policy in Bulgaria, 77
- Adolphus, Duke of Nassau, opinion of Battenberg's candidacy, 138
- Adrianople, Turkish administrative center, 8, 12
- Agura, Dimitŭr, minister of education in second Russian cabinet, 233
- Aix, Grekov educated in, 126
- Aksakov, Ivan Sergeievich, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 39; views on constitutional government in Bulgaria, 58; friendship with Petko Karavelov, 86; influence on Russian civil officials in Bulgaria, 142; consulted by Battenberg, 221
- Albania, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Aleko Pasha, governor-general of Eastern Rumelia, suggested as successor to Battenberg, 207
- Alexander, Prince of Hesse, father of Alexander of Battenberg, 136; assures Queen Victoria of Battenberg's reliability, 139; appeals to Alexander II, 170
- Alexander II, Emperor of Russia, uncle of Battenberg, 136; opinion of Battenberg's candidacy, 138; instructs Dondukov to give Battenberg power to amend constitution, 141; responsibility for liberal character of constitution, 144; advises Battenberg on policy, 171-172; listens to Battenberg's case, 179; recommends that Liberals be given a fair chance, 179; effects of his assassination on Russia's Bulgarian policy, 192; factor in Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 193; assassination celebrated by Liberals, 194
- Alexander III, Emperor of Russia, change of foreign policy under his reign, 144; discusses Bulgarian affairs with Battenberg, 192-193; supports Giers' policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 198-200; receives Battenberg at his coronation, 235; withdraws his support from Battenberg, 240; discusses Bulgarian affairs with Balabanov, 248
- Alexander of Battenberg, Prince of Bulgaria, influenced by Stoilov, 126; qualifications examined by Grand National Assembly, 134; background and education, 136; impressions of Turkish campaign, 136; constitutional views, 134-142, 237; visits St. Petersburg, 142, 177, 221; criticizes Russian policy, 142; relations with Prince Carol, 151, 160; appoints first cabinet, 156-164; conflict with first National Assembly, 164-181; considers appointment of coalition cabinet, 165; holds interview with Karavelov, 167; dissolves first National Assembly, 169; appeals to Alexander II, 170; favors employment of German officers in Bulgarian army, 176; obtains removal of General Parensov, 180; impressions of conditions in Russia, 180; complains of constitution to Count Kálnoky, 181; difficulties reported by Khevenhüller, 189-190; relations with Karavelov, 190; reaction to Alexander II's assassination, 193; sees Alexander III and Giers, 192-193; announces *coup d'état*, 195-196; suppresses freedom of press, 204; establishes military tribunals and electoral commissions, 205; unconstitutional regime, 210-221; establishes council of state, 215; embarrassed by revolt in Herzegovina, 218; favors a *rapprochement* between Conservatives and Liberals, 219-220; sees need for firm administrator, 220; urges recall of Hitrovo, 220-221; projected

## Index

- constitutional amendments, 222-224; collapse of his personal regime, 231; attends coronation of Alexander III, 234-235; removal demanded by Liberals, 236; appoints committee to elaborate constitutional amendments, 241; agrees to restore constitution, 241-243; attempts to promote new coalition cabinet, 259; loses Russian support, 260; constitutional policy, 269-271
- Amendments, constitutional, favored by Battenberg, 166, 170-171, 177-178; proposed by Liberal *Nezavisimost*, 187; passed by National Assembly, 249-250, 315-319
- Andrássy, Count, reliance on Anglo-Austrian cooperation in Bulgaria, 149
- Andros, island of, Greek schools, 27
- Antim, Bishop of Vidin, president of Constitutional Assembly, 79
- Anuchin, General D. G., assistant to Cherkaskii and Dondukov, 54
- Army, Bulgarian, instrument of Russian policy, 176
- Artisans, role in renaissance, 9, 12-16, 265-266
- Ashburnham, J., British diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1879-80, reports on dissolution of first National Assembly, 170; views on Bulgarian situation, 178
- Assembly, freedom of, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 92-93; restriction desired by Battenberg, 166, 177
- Assembly of Notables, *see* Constitutional Assembly
- Association, freedom of, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 92-93
- Atanasovich, Dr., minister of education in first Conservative cabinet, 158
- Athens, Greek schools in, 26
- Ausgleich*, Austrian, model for Bulgarian plan for dualism, 39
- Austria-Hungary, represented by Zwiedinek at Constitutional Assembly, 73; apprehensive of Russia's aims in Bulgaria, 143; cooperation with Great Britain in Bulgaria, 148-152; urges completion of Vienna-Constantinople railroad, 184, 217; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 200-201; supports Battenberg against Russians, 260; policy after Treaty of Berlin, 268-271
- Bagehot, Walter, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Bakunin, Michael, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 41-42
- Balabanov, Marko Dimitriev, proposes reduction of the prince's civil list, 89; introduces article prohibiting slavery, 91; career, 128; editor of *Vitosha*, 128; minister of foreign affairs in first Conservative cabinet, 158; referred to as "His Excellency" in *Vitosha*, 159; dropped from Conservative cabinet, 173; serves as intermediary between Tsankov and Hitrovo, 219; favors moderate constitutional reforms, 219; minister of foreign affairs in first coalition cabinet, 244; undertakes mission to Russia, 247-248
- Balchik, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Bългарski glas*, 1876-77, organ of extremists, 47
- Bългарski orel*, 1846-47, role in renaissance, 32
- Balkan*, founded in Sofia as organ of Russophile propaganda, 234
- Banat, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Belgium, in Lyuben Karavelov's political thought, 42
- Belgrade, Serbian schools in, 27; Bulgarian émigrés in, 33-34
- Benedictine school, Bebek, influence on Bulgarian colony in Constantinople, 28
- Berlin, treaty of, provisions for Bulgarian government, 3; effect on subsequent Bulgarian policy, 3;

## Index

- reduces term of Russian occupation of Bulgaria, 54; provides for constitutional assembly, 58; interpretation of Article 4, 74-75; discontent expressed in Constitutional Assembly, 75-80; effect on Russian policy, 142; provisions concerning Vienna-Constantinople and Ruschuk-Varna railroads, 184
- Bianconi, F., adviser of Liberal Party, 174
- Bibesco, Prince, candidate for position of prince, 135
- Bicameral system, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 61-62, 84, 93-99; demanded by Conservative Party, 224
- Biegeleben, Rüdiger Freiherr von, Austrian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1881-1885, 216; expresses concern over Russian influence in Bulgaria, 230, 242; comments on effects of Sobolev regime on Bulgarian politics, 238; describes coalition cabinet, 245; describes proposed upper chamber, 250; opinion of Karavelov, 260-261
- Blackstone, Sir William, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Bobchev, Stefan S., co-editor of *Stara planina*, 47
- Bogorov, Ivan, editor of *Bългарski orel*, 32; co-editor of *Tsarigradski vëstnik*, 32
- Bolgrad, workers' communes in, 16; *Bългарski glas* published in, 47
- Bosnia, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Botfov, Hristo, life, 43-45; on staff of *Dunavska zora*, 44; editor of *Duma na bûlgarskîti emigranti*, 44; political thought, 44-45; organizes workers' communes, 15-16, 45; attitude towards Russia, 41; influence of his ideas in Constitutional Assembly, 113; socialist influence in his writings, 120; leader of extremists, 266
- Braila, workers' communes in, 16; Bulgarian colony in, 15, *Vûzrazhdane* published in, 47
- Brunenghi, Italian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, at Constitutional Assembly, 73
- Brüning, German diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, at Constitutional Assembly, 73; supports Battenberg in his first cabinet crisis, 169
- Bucharest, Bulgarian colony in, 15, 33-34; headquarters of Bulgarian extremists, 36; Rakovski dies in, 38; *Stara planina* published in, 47
- Bucharest committee, plan of dualism for Bulgaria, 33
- Bulgaria, constitutional development, 3-6; contradictory development of internal and foreign policy after 1878, 3; union with Eastern Rumelia, 4; national renaissance, 9; self-government under Turkish rule, 5, 7-23; feudal system, 7; penetration of Western ideas, 23-31; commercial expansion before liberation, 25; trend of political thought, 31-47; as independent state, Bobchev's conception, 47; undertakes to complete Tsaribrod-Vakarel railroad, 245-246
- Bûlgariya*, 1859-63, role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 32
- Bûlgarski glas*, Conservative organ, 128; publishes attack on Liberals, 188-189
- Bûlgarski lev*, Liberal organ, 131
- Burián, Stephan Freiherr von, Austrian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1881, estimate of Battenberg's regime, 210
- Burmov, Todor Stefanov, leader of moderate wing in church question, 33; editor of *Vrëmya*, 33; proposes form of ministerial responsibility, 63; education and career as Conservative leader, 125-126; editor of *Vitoshka*, 128; considered for position in coalition cabinet, 157; minister-president of first Conservative

## Index

- cabinet, 158; position on cabinet challenged by Stambolov, 159; dropped from first Conservative cabinet, 173; favors moderate constitutional reforms, 219; minister of finance in second Russian cabinet, 233
- Cabinet, discussion of its form and powers in Constitutional Assembly, 60
- Cantacuzene, General, appointed Bulgarian minister of war, 248
- Capital punishment, application by military tribunals decreed by Battenberg, 205
- Carol, Prince of Rumania, candidate for position of prince, 135; relations with Battenberg, 151, 160
- Cassation, court of, represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69; sustains Battenberg's invocation of Turkish press law, 204
- Central Chancery, in Russian administrative system in Bulgaria, 55
- Central Revolutionary Committee, founded in Bucharest, 36; statute edited by Lyuben Karavelov, 43
- Cherkaskii, Prince Vladimir Aleksandrovich, appointed Russian Imperial Commissioner in Bulgaria, 52; views, 52-53; death, 54
- Chernyshevski, Nikolai Gavrilovich, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 39, 42; on Botïov, 44; on Stambolov, 47
- Chirol, M. Valentine, praises Liberal regime in *Fortnightly review*, 190-191
- Chomakov, St., leader of radical wing in church question, 32-33
- Chorbajis*, role in renaissance, 9-12, 265-266; functions codified, 11-12
- Church, role in renaissance, 265
- Church trustees, role in renaissance, 12
- Civil liberties, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 84, 90-93; constitutional provisions summarized, 107-108; restriction favored by Stoilov, 203
- Civil list of prince, reduced by Constitutional Assembly, 89
- Clergy, role in renaissance, 33, 265-266
- Coalition cabinet, feasibility discussed, 156-157; considered by Battenberg, 165; negotiations concerning, 166-169; overthrows Russian regime, 270-271
- Commerce, role in renaissance, 15
- Commission, Russian-Bulgarian, established in 1877 to study conditions in Bulgaria, 52-53
- Committee of fifteen, elected to report on Organic Statute, 80; submits report on Organic Statute, 81-82; report attacked by extremists, 83; defeated, 84
- Commune, Paris, influence on Botïov, 45
- Communes, village, role in renaissance, 12
- Compagnie pour l'exploitation des chemins de fer de la Turquie d'Europe*, rights on Vienna-Constantinople railroad renounced by Hirsch, 245
- Confederation, Danubian, feasibility discussed by Bulgarian leaders, 34
- Conscience, freedom of, accepted by the committee of fifteen, 82
- "Conservative," as applied to Bulgarian politics, 117
- Conservative Party, attacks Liberals, 113; summary description, 123; relations with public opinion, 124; respect of its leaders for Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, 124; forms first Bulgarian cabinet, 158; lack of support in first National Assembly, 164; resignation of first cabinet, 166; second cabinet appointed, 169; opposes Russian economic penetration, 184-185, 217, 230; attacks Liberals in *Bûlgarski glas*, 188-189; constitutional program, 203, 224, 237; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 208-210;



## Index

- rivalry with Russia for control of council of state, 211-214; wins elections for third National Assembly, 229; withdraws support from first Russian cabinet, 230; sends delegation to Alexander III's coronation, 236-237; campaign against Russians and Liberals, 233-235; loses Russian support, 260
- Constantinople, Turkish administrative center, 8; market for Bulgarian products, 13; Bulgarian colony in, 15, 28; commercial contacts with Bulgaria, 25; center for dissemination of Western culture, 28; Bogorov's and Ekzarh's *Tsarigradski vĕstnik* published in, 32; Bulgarian colony and church question in, 32-33; headquarters of Bulgarian moderates, 34; in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan confederation, 40; Ikonomov and Burmov as Bulgarian leaders in, 125; Nachevich studies in, 127; Milarov studies in, 130
- Constantinople Conference, 1876-77, reforms discussed, 21-22; proposals for self-government in Bulgaria, 50; its proposed reforms studied by Russian administrators, 53
- Constitution, Belgian, 1831, influence on Bulgarian Constitution, 109
- Constitution, Bulgarian, and Schuyler-Tseretelev proposals, 49-50; summary of its provisions, 101-110; intentions of its founders, 102; provisions against its violation, 108; interpreted by Liberal *Nezavisimost*, 118-119; suspended, 192-232; restored, 233-264; interpreted by Petko Karavelov, 257-258; obstacles to its success in Bulgaria, 271-272; text, 291-309
- Constitution, English, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30
- Constitution, French, 1852, discussed in *Tsarigradski vĕstnik*, 32
- Constitution, Greek, 1864, compared with Bulgarian Constitution, 109
- Constitution, Prussian, 1850, model for Serbian Constitution, 109
- Constitution, Rumanian, 1866, influence on Bulgarian Constitution, 59; compared with Bulgarian Constitution, 109
- Constitution, Serbian, 1869, model for Bulgarian Constitution, 59, 61, 109; compared with Organic Statute, 64-65; source of Bulgarian system of representation, 105
- Constitutional Assembly, preparation for in pre-liberation press, 31; provided for in Treaty of Berlin, 52, 58; preparations made by Russian administrators, 52-54; provided for in Treaty of San Stefano, 57; organization, 69-75; general account, 69-100; national leaders in, 71; younger generation in, 71; regulations for its internal order, 72-73; foreign representatives at, 73-74; meets in Tirnovo, 75; division of opinion in, 80; inexperience of its members, 101; negligence of Russian advisers, 101; responsible for liberal nature of constitution, 140-141; question of upper chamber discussed in, 211; achievements, 267
- Constitutional government in Bulgaria, factors influencing its development, 191
- Constitutional issues, subject of political controversy, 115
- Constitutional struggle, summary of conflicting forces, 154-155
- Correspondence, sole means of communication before 1840, 32
- Council of ministers, functions defined by constitution, 104; Ivan P. Slaveĭkov as secretary of, 130
- Council of state, in Serbian Constitution, 65; in Organic Statute, 65, 67-68; defeated in Constitutional Assembly, 99; favored by Stoilov, 203; established by Battenberg, 211-214; statute adopted, 212; functions, 213; abolished, 253; text of statute, 311-314

## Index

- Coup d'état*, Battenberg's, preparations and execution, 192-210; announced by Battenberg, 195-196; criticized as unconstitutional by Tsankov, 206; effects on labor movement, 220; aims and achievements, 270-271
- Crete, revolt of 1866, influence on Bulgarian movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Crimean War, influence on renaissance, 17, 50
- Croatia, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Czartoryski, Prince Adam, leader of Polish monarchists, 24-25
- Dalmatia, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Danev, Stoyan, publishes his views on self-government in *Maritsa*, 119; Liberal leader, 130; editor of *Sredets*, 132; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 206
- Danube *vilayet*, established, 21
- Danubian Principalities, Russian policy in, precedent for Russian policy in Bulgaria, 59
- Darmstadt, Battenberg educated in, 136
- Davydov, Aleksandr Petrovich, Russian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1879-80, advocates moderate Russian policy in Bulgaria, 147; opinion of constitution, 150; recommends appointment of coalition cabinet, 165
- Demantovich, Major General, director of Central Chancery, 58
- Democratic Party, fictitious creation of Stamboliški's political theory, 123
- Dilke, Sir Charles W., interprets British policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 201
- Disraeli, Benjamin, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- District councils, represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69
- Districts, in Russian administrative system in Bulgaria, 55
- Dobrolyubov, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 39
- Dobrovski, Ivan, editor of *Mirozrenie*, 32
- Dobrovský, Josef, influence in Bulgaria, 27
- Dondukov-Korsakov, Prince Aleksandr Mihailovich, appointed Imperial Commissioner in Bulgaria, 54; establishes judicial system in Bulgaria, 56; instructed to convoke Constitutional Assembly, 58; familiarity with views of Bulgarian notables, 60; opens Constitutional Assembly, 69; role during discussion of "national question," 76-78; candidate for position of prince, 135; accused of undermining Battenberg's position, 140-141; instructed to give Battenberg power to amend constitution, 141; advocates aggressive Russian policy in Bulgaria, 144-145, 175; aggressive Russian policy adopted, 259
- Dragoon corps, established by Russians, becomes political issue, 229-230
- Dragoons, Hessian, Battenberg lieutenant in, 136
- Drinov, Marin S., head of department of education in Central Chancery, 55; views on constitutional government in Bulgaria, 60; edits clauses of Organic Statute dealing with church, 60-61; member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; edits Article 38 of constitution, 89; refuses to enter first Conservative cabinet, 157; sponsors Russian plan for council of state, 212; refuses to serve on council of state, 213-214
- Dualism, supported by Rakovski, 33; proposed as solution for Bulgarian question, 39; discussed by Bulgarian émigrés in Bucharest, 39

## Index

- Duma na búlgarskíti emigranti*, 1871, forum for Botíov's ideas, 44
- Dunavska zora*, 1869-71, organ of extremists in Bucharest, 39
- Dunavski lebed*, role in movement for Bulgarian independence, 37-38
- Dupnitsa, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Eastern Question, Rakovski's views on, 37-38; cause of uncertainty at Constitutional Assembly, 77; Russia's policies, 142
- Eastern Rumelia, *see* Bulgaria, union with Eastern Rumelia; representatives of, support moderate view in "national question," 75-76; at Constitutional Assembly, 76; union with Bulgaria considered at Constitutional Assembly, 77
- Ecclesiastical independence, movement for, as training in self-government, 18-19, 49; discussed in press, 31; development, 32-33; programs of extremists and moderates, 33
- Economic issues, source of political controversy, 121-123
- Education, adult, role in renaissance, 20; elementary, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 84, 91-92; popular, role in renaissance, 25-26
- Ehrenroth, General Kazimir Gustavovich, appointed Bulgarian minister of war, 180; policy as member of cabinet, 183; role in Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 193-195; arrests editor of *Nezavisimost*, 204; defends *coup d'état* as constitutional, 207; resigns, 211; reappointment to Bulgaria requested by Battenberg, 221, 234-235
- Einheitsbewegung*, German, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30
- Ekzarh, Aleksandŭr S., co-editor of *Tsarigradski vĕstnik*, 32
- Elections, for Grand National Assembly, 209; for fourth National Assembly, 256
- Electoral commissions, established by Battenberg, 205
- Electoral procedure, in Russian administrative system in Bulgaria, 56; in Organic Statute, 67; defined by special law, 99-100, 105; in first Bulgarian elections, 161-164; in elections for second National Assembly, 174; indirect voting favored by Stoilov, 203; amended by first Russian cabinet, 222
- Emergency, national, provided for in Article 47 of constitution, 106-107
- England, *see* Great Britain
- Enos, Petko Karavelov educated in, 85
- Epirus, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Erdel, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Exarchate, Bulgarian, charter, 19; role in Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 208
- Executive power, in Organic Statute, 66
- Extraordinary powers, requested by Battenberg for seven years, 196
- Extremists, Bulgarian, political views before liberation, 34, 36-47; summary of views and influence, 50-51; prominence in Constitutional Assembly, 80; domination of Constitutional Assembly, 84-100; composition and leadership in Constitutional Assembly, 85-88; role in renaissance, 266
- Farley, James Lewis, criticizes constitution, 173-174
- Federation, Balkan, Lyuben Karavelov's plan, 40-41
- Foreign affairs, views held by extremists and moderates in pre-liberation Bulgaria, 50
- Foreigners, rights of, defined in Organic Statute, 66
- Fortnightly review*, publishes Chi-

## Index

- rol's article praising Liberal regime, 190-191
- Fotinov, K. G., editor of *Lyuboslovie*, 32
- France, represented by Schefer at Constitutional Assembly, 73; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 201-203
- Gabrovo, role in renaissance, 13; first Bulgarian school, 25
- Gaida, 1863-67, role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Galata Serai, *lycée* of, influence on Bulgarian colony in Constantinople, 28
- Galats, workers' communes in, 16
- Genovich, N., editor of the *Turtsiya*, 33
- Gentry, see *Chorbajis*
- Germany, represented by Brüning at Constitutional Assembly, 73; policy in Bulgaria, 148; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 200-201
- Gerov, Naïden, representative Bulgarian moderate, 34-35
- Giers, Nikolai Karlovich, consents to election of deputies to Constitutional Assembly, 69; receives Dondukov's reports on "national question," 76-77; favors moderate Russian policy in Bulgaria, 142-143, 146-148, 268; discusses Bulgarian affairs with Battenberg, 192; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 197-201; loses confidence in Battenberg, 235, 246; supports Sobolev's recommendations, 236; discusses Bulgarian affairs with Balabanov, 248
- Gilds, role in renaissance, 12-15, 48, 265; role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Ginsburg, promotes Russian railroad interests in Bulgaria, 183-184, 217
- Gladstone, William Ewart, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85; supports constitution, 174; declines to oppose Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 207
- Orbanov, Petko, member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 209
- Gorski pútnik*, written by Rakovski, 1857, 37
- Gradovski, Aleksandr Dmitrievich, amends Organic Statute, 156
- Grammatik der bulgarischen Sprache*, published by Dragan Tsankov in Vienna, 88
- Grand National Assembly, described in Organic Statute, 67; composition and functions defined by constitution, 106; meets in Tirnovo, 134; convocation announced by Battenberg, 195-196; meets in Svishtov, 210; accepts Battenberg's terms, 210; convocation considered by Tsankov and Nachevich, 238; changes in its composition in draft amendments, 251
- Granville, Lord, policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 201-203
- Great Britain, represented by Palgrave at Constitutional Assembly, 73; apprehensive of Russian aims in Bulgaria, 143; policy of cooperation with Austria-Hungary in Bulgaria, 148-150, 152-154; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 201-203; supports Battenberg against Russians, 260; policy after Treaty of Berlin, 268-271
- Greece, Rakovski sceptical of friendly relations with, 38; in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; Russia's experience in, precedent for policy in Bulgaria, 144; role in Balkan politics after Treaty of Berlin, 151
- Greek schools, role in renaissance, 26
- Grekov, Dimităr Panaïotov, member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; views on relationship of church and state, 90; supports proposal for senate, 94; education and career as Conservative leader, 126; editor of *Bûlgarski glas*, 128; con-

## Index

- sidered for position in coalition cabinet, 157; minister of justice in first Conservative cabinet, 158; position in cabinet challenged by Stambolov, 159; in second Conservative cabinet, 173; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 209; minister of justice in second Battenberg cabinet, 214; in first Russian cabinet, 221; accuses Russian cabinet of undermining Bulgarian independence, 234; president of third National Assembly, 244; proposes postponement of Grand National Assembly, 252
- Grigorii Dorostolochervenski, Bishop, leader of clerical faction in Constitutional Assembly, 89
- Grozev, Ivan, obtains contract for Tsaribrod-Vakarel railroad, 263
- Gyurgevo, *Nova Bulgariya* published in, 47
- Gyuzelev, Ivan, minister of education in first Liberal cabinet, 181; dropped from first Liberal cabinet, 186
- Hajienov, promotes Bulgarian railroad interests, 217; dismissed as mayor of Sofia, 233
- Hanka, Václav, influence in Bulgaria, 27
- Harmanli, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Hatti Humayun, 1856, provisions, 17
- Hatti Sherif, 1839, provisions, 16-17
- Hebrew faith, represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69
- Heidelberg, Radoslavov studies in, 117
- Henry XVII of Reuss, candidate for position of prince, 135
- Hertzen, Alexander, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 39
- Herzegovina, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; revolt in, embarrasses Battenberg, 218
- Hilkov, minister of public works, commerce and agriculture in second Russian cabinet, 233
- Hirsch, Baron, contractor for Vienna-Constantinople railroad, 184; renounces contract with Sublime Porte, 245
- History of the Bulgarian People*, as factor in Jireček's reputation, 127
- Hitrovo, Mihail Aleksandrovich, Russian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1881-82, ignorant of Battenberg's plans for *coup d'état*, 195-197; instructed to support Battenberg, 200; sponsors Russian plan for a council of state, 212; organizes volunteers to aid Herzegovinian revolt, 218; negotiates with Tsankov, 218-219
- Holy Synod, Bulgarian, composition, 19; jurisdiction defined in Constitutional Assembly, 90; Balabanov as secretary of, 128; disciplines Bishop Meleti, 231
- Ignatiev, Nikolai Pavlovich, candidate for position of prince, 135; favors aggressive Russian policy in Bulgaria, 145
- Ikonomov Todor, views on constitutional government in Bulgaria, 61-62; leader of moderates in discussion of "national question," 76; vice-president of Constitutional Assembly, 79; supports proposal for senate, 94-95; education and career as Conservative leader, 124-125; editor of *Bългарski glas*, 128; minister of interior in second Conservative cabinet, 173; president of Grand National Assembly, 209; president of council of state, 214, 253; in first coalition cabinet, 244
- Ilarion Makariopolski, leader of moderate wing in church question, 33
- Imperial Commissioner, head of Russian administrative system in Bulgaria, 55
- Industry, modern, role in renaissance, 15
- Intellectuals, role in renaissance, 265-266

## Index

- Interpellation, right of, in Rumanian Constitution and Organic Statute, 65
- Ionin, Aleksandr Semenovich, Russian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1883, 236; urges Battenberg to restore constitution, 239; predicts Liberal majority in third National Assembly, 240; openly opposes Battenberg, 246; recalled, 248; recommends return to aggressive Russian policy, 259
- Iosif, Exarch, views on constitutional government in Bulgaria, 61; attempts to bring Conservatives and Liberals together, 208; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 208
- Ismail, workers' communes in, 16
- Italy, represented by Brunenghi at Constitutional Assembly, 73; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 202
- Jireček, Constantin, on origins of *chorbaji* class, 10; adviser of Conservatives, 127; minister of education in first Battenberg cabinet, 211
- Judicial system, established by Dondukov, 56; in Organic Statute, 66; neglected in constitution, 107
- Kalofer, birthplace of Botfov, 43
- Kanitz, F., travels in Bulgaria, 25
- Karadžić, Vuk, influence in Bulgaria, 27
- Karavelov, Lyuben, life, 39; editor of *Svoboda* and *Nezavisimost*, 40; political ideas, 40-43; plans for Balkan federation, 40-42; attitude towards Russia, 41; influence of his ideas in Constitutional Assembly, 113; criticizes Balabanov, 128; leader of extremists, 266
- Karavelov, Petko, member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; favors boycott of Constitutional Assembly, 77-78; vice-president of Constitutional Assembly, 79; attacks report of committee of fifteen, 83; biographical sketch, 85-86; explanations of success in Constitutional Assembly, 86-87; opposes proposal for senate, 94; role in Liberal Party as interpreted by Stamboliški, 123; Liberal leader, 129; considered for position in coalition cabinet, 157; opposes prince's defiance of parliamentary government, 164; elected president of first National Assembly, 165; holds interview with Battenberg, 167; minister of finance in first Liberal cabinet, 181; forms second Liberal cabinet, 186; relations with Battenberg, 190, 194; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 206; goes into voluntary exile, 218; defends constitution, 224-228; opposes formation of coalition cabinet, 244-245; mayor of Philippopolis, 244; leads opposition to coalition government, 249; heads left wing of Liberal Party, 254; excluded from second coalition cabinet, 254; forms his second cabinet, 257; political objectives, 257-258, 261-264; rejects plans for third coalition cabinet, 259; advocates government ownership of national bank and railroads, 261-264
- Karlovo, textile industry in, 25
- Katkov, Mihail Nikiforovich, views on constitutional government in Bulgaria, 58; consulted by Battenberg, 221; withdraws support from Battenberg, 235
- Kaulbars, General Aleksandr, minister of war in first Russian cabinet, 221; approves visit of Liberal delegation to Alexander III's coronation, 235; resigns, 243
- Kavarna, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Kennedy, Robert, acting British diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1882, 1884, discusses constitutional amendments with Battenberg, 223; opinion of Karavelov's regime, 260
- Khevenhüller, Count Ludwig An-

## Index

- dreas von, Austrian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1879-1881, comments on Battenberg's position, 139; interprets Austria-Hungary's policy in Bulgaria, 149; influence on Battenberg, 150; criticizes Bulgarian electoral procedure, 161-162; sceptical regarding Battenberg's prestige, 177; reports favorably on first Liberal cabinet, 182; comments on difficulties facing Battenberg, 189-190
- Kiev, Slavic Benevolent Society established in, 30; Dragan Tsankov studies in, 88
- Kiev Theological Seminary, Ikonov and Burmov study in, 125
- Kisimov, P., editor of *Otechestvo*, 39
- Kliment, bishop of Tirnovo, president of Grand National Assembly, 134; heads second Conservative cabinet, 169; qualifications for presidency of second Conservative cabinet, 172-173; in charge of affairs during Battenberg's absence, 194
- Königliche sächsische Kadettenschule*, Dresden, Battenberg educated in, 136
- Kopitar, B., influence in Bulgaria, 27
- Koprivshitsa, role in renaissance, 13; birthplace of Lyuben Karavelov, 38; birthplace of Petko Karavelov, 85
- Kotel, role in renaissance, 13; birthplace of Rakovski, 37; birthplace of Ikonov, 125
- Kovalski, Ivan Martynovich, influence on Bulgarians in Odessa, 47
- Koyander, A. I., appointed Russian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 248; advises Karavelov against formation of coalition cabinet, 259
- Kraguyevac, Serbian schools in, 27
- Krūstevich, Gavril, leader of moderate wing in church question, 33
- Krylov, General, minister of war in second Battenberg cabinet, 214
- Kumani, Russian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1880-81, favors aggressive Russian policy, 183; learns of Battenberg's plans for a *coup d'état*, 193-197
- Labor movement, origins in Bulgaria, 220
- Lascelles, Frank Cavendish, British diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1880-1885, refutes Chirol's praise of Liberal regime, 191; reports on Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 201; supports Ehrenroth's interpretation of *coup d'état*, 207; discusses constitutional amendments with Battenberg, 223; foresees possibility of anti-Russian uprising, 238; opposes Russian influence in Bulgaria, 242
- Lawyers, attacked by Slaveïkov as "disease," 96
- Layard, Sir Austen Henry, informed on panslav activity by Palgrave, 153-154
- Leipzig, Bogorov's *Bǎlgarski orel* published in, 32
- "Liberal," as applied to Bulgarian politics, 117
- Liberal Party, as viewed by Stamboliiski, 123; description, 123-133; supported by adherents of aggressive Russian policy, 144-145; wins elections for second National Assembly, 175; first cabinet, 181-191; opposes Russian economic penetration of Bulgaria, 185; political conduct in second National Assembly, 186-188; policy as factor in Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 193-194; constitutional program, 203-204; boycotts elections for council of state, 213; demands restoration of constitution, 218; holds congress in Ruschuk, 234; constitutional views, 237; wins elections for fourth National Assembly, 256; first experience in constitutional government, 269-270
- Liberals, *see* Extremists



- Lishin, acting Russian diplomatic agent and consul, 1881, supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 198
- Livadia, Battenberg visits Alexander II in, 141
- Lobanov, Prince Alexis Borisovich, correspondence with Dondukov-Korsakov on Eastern Question, 77
- Long, reading room opened in, 26
- Long, Albert, opinion of Stambolov, 129
- Lukiyanov, S. I., head of department of justice in Central Chancery, 57; charged with preparation of Organic Statute, 59; supports extremists in church question, 89-90; role in Constitutional Assembly, 141
- Lyuboslovie*, 1842, 1844-46, role in renaissance, 32
- Macedonia, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; in Bobchev's independent Bulgaria, 47; represented in Constitutional Assembly, 76
- Mahmud II, reforms of, 16
- Maine, Sir Henry, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Makedoniya*, 1868-72, role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Marie, Empress of Russia, aunt of Battenberg, 136; opinion of Battenberg's candidacy, 138
- Marinov, Dimitŭr, favors boycott of Constitutional Assembly, 77-78
- Maritsa*, publishes Danev's views on self-government, 119; Conservative organ, 128
- Marković, Svetozar, influence on Liberals, 120
- Marxist interpretation, of Bulgarian party structure, 255
- Matinchev, Iv. N., defends freedom of press, 119
- Medical profession, role in renaissance, 15
- Mediterranean Sea, commercial contacts with Bulgaria, 25
- Mehmed Kibrisli, tours of inspection in Bulgaria, 20
- Meleti, Bishop of Sofia, interned in Rila monastery by Stoilov, 231
- Memorandum attacking Russian cabinet, presented to Battenberg by Conservatives, 234
- Midhat Pasha, codifies functions of *chorbajis*, 11-12; appointed governor of Danube *vilayet*, 21
- Milarov, Svetoslav, editor of *Vŭzrazhdane*, 47; Liberal leader, 130; editor of *Nezavisimost*, 131
- Military service, in Organic Statute, 67
- Milyutin, Dmitriĭ Alekseevich, role in Russia's foreign policy, 142; favors aggressive Russian policy, 143-146, 175-176, 179, 268; reaction to Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 197-198; views on Bulgarian Constitution, 239; aggressive policy finally adopted, 259
- Ministerial responsibility, views of Burmov, 63; in Organic Statute, 68; related to veto power, 103; defined by constitution, 104
- Ministers, functions defined by constitution, 104
- Mirozrenie*, 1850-51, role in renaissance, 32
- Missionaries, American, influence in Bulgaria, 23-24
- Moderates, Bulgarian, political views before liberation, 34-36; summary of views and influence, 50-51; role in Constitutional Assembly, 75-84; attempt boycott of Constitutional Assembly, 96-99; accuse extremists of unfair practices, 98; role in renaissance, 266
- Molov, D., in first coalition cabinet, 244
- Montenegro, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Moscow, Slavic Benevolent Society founded in, 30; Lyuben Karavelov's career in, 39; Petko Karavelov studies in, 85
- Moslem faith, represented in Consti-



- tutional Assembly, 69; represented in senate proposed by committee of fifteen, 83
- Municipalities, in Russian administrative system, 55
- Mustafa III, publishes *ferman* of 1773 regulating gilds, 14
- Nachevich, Grigor Dimitrov, co-editor of *Stara planina*, 47; member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; education and career as Conservative leader, 127; editor of *Maritsa* and *Vitosha*, 128; considered for position in coalition cabinet, 157; minister of finance in first Conservative cabinet, 158; role in second Conservative cabinet, 173; editor of *Bŭlgarski glas*, 188; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 209; minister of interior in second Battenberg cabinet, 214; retention in cabinet demanded by Battenberg, 220; member of first Russian cabinet, 221; accuses Russian cabinet of undermining Bulgarian independence, 234; conducts negotiations with Tsankov, 238; minister of finance in first coalition cabinet, 244
- Narodnost*, 1867-69, organ of extremists in Bucharest, 39; 1879-80, Liberal organ, 131
- National Assembly, discussion of its form and powers before Constitutional Assembly, 60; in Serbian Constitution and Organic Statute, 65; in Organic Statute, 67; form favored by committee of fifteen, 82; membership made entirely elective, 98; convoked by Battenberg, 102; composition and functions defined by constitution, 105; conflict with Battenberg, 164-181; restriction of its powers desired by Battenberg, 177; composition and functions defended by Karavelov, 227; third, convenes, 229; convocation proposed by Conservatives, 234; third, called to consider railroad convention and occupation debt, 239-240
- National bank, Russian scheme promoted by Utin, 183-184; as a political issue, 261-262
- "National question," discussion of, in Constitutional Assembly, 75-80
- Neue Freie Presse*, publishes article attacking first Liberal cabinet, 182
- Nezavisimost*, 1873-74 edition, forum for Lyuben Karavelov's ideas, 40; 1880-82 edition, organ of Liberal opinion, 118-119; publishes proposed Liberal amendments to constitution, 187; attacks Battenberg's policy, 204; published in Philippopolis by Karavelov and Slaveïkov, 218
- Nihad Pasha, Turkish diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 207
- Nihilism, Russian, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30-31
- Nikopol, Turkish military center, 13
- Nish, Turkish military center, 13
- North Banat, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Nova Bŭlgariya*, 1876-77, extremist organ, 47
- Obradović, Dositei, influence in Bulgaria, 27
- Obrenović, Prince Michael, relations with Rakovski, 37
- Obruchev, Nikolaï Nikolaevich, opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 199; views on Bulgarian constitution, 239
- Occupation debt, Russian, voted by National Assembly, 247
- Odessa, Bulgarian colony in, 15; scholarships established for Bulgarian students, 29-30; Slavic Benevolent Society established in, 30; Bulgarian emigrants in, 33-34; Botïov studies in, 43; Bulgarian colony represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69; Tsankov studies in, 86; Stambolov studies in, 129

- Officers, German, apply for commissions in Bulgarian army, 176
- Officials, Russian, power to dismiss them desired by Battenberg, 177-178
- Oltenitsa, workers' communes in, 16
- Organic Statute, preparation of, 52-68; preliminary draft, 57-65; compared with Serbian Constitution, 65; final draft, 65-68; sent to St. Petersburg for approval, 65; provisions for its consideration in Constitutional Assembly, 72-73; significance of changes made by Constitutional Assembly, 71-72; procedure adopted for its discussion in Constitutional Assembly, 80; report of committee of fifteen, 81-82; name changed to "Constitution," 88; provisions summarized, 266-267
- Orthodox Church, Bulgarian, symbol of patriotism, 24; represented in senate proposed by committee of fifteen, 83; status discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 84, 89-90
- Orthodox Church, Greek, position in Ottoman Empire, 18; Rakovski's views on, 38
- Otechestvo*, 1869-71, organ of moderates in Bucharest, 39
- Ottoman Empire, *eyalet* system, 16; effects in Bulgaria of reform movement, 16-23; *millet* system, 18; *vilayet* system, as contribution to Bulgarian self-government, 48; administrative system in Bulgaria, accepted by the Russians, 53; raises objections to Organic Statute, 81; delays construction of Vienna-Constantinople railroad, 217; opportunities for self-government in Bulgaria, 265
- Paisii, Father, role in renaissance, 18; pioneer of Bulgarian nationalism, 34
- Palgrave, William Gifford, British diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1879, attends Constitutional Assembly, 73-74; influence in controversy over "national question," 78; impatient with delays in Constitutional Assembly, 79; first impressions of Bulgarian political parties, 111-112; later impressions of Bulgarian political parties, 115-117; estimate of Bulgarian nationalism, 152; views on influence of panslavism, 153; comments on Bulgarian electioneering, 162; serves as mediator in negotiations for a coalition cabinet, 167-168
- Panagurishte, role in renaissance, 13
- Panslavism, influence in Russia's Bulgarian policy, 142-143
- Parentov, General Petr Dmitrievich, favors aggressive Russian policy in Bulgaria, 144-145; minister of war in first Conservative cabinet, 158; opposes dissolution of first National Assembly, 165-166, 169; opponent of Battenberg, 175-177; Battenberg desires recall of, 177; aggressive policy accepted, 259
- Paris, Grekov educated in, 126; Nachevich studies in, 127; Balabanov studies in, 128
- Parties, political, origins and characteristics, 110-124; economic interpretation of, 122-123
- Pazarjik, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Peasants, role in renaissance, 9-10
- Pelagić, influence on Bulgarian Liberals, 120
- Perteve, Efendi, submits Turkish objections to Organic Statute, 81
- Petrich, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Petrovich, Božo, of Montenegro, candidate for position of prince, 135
- Philippopolis, Turkish administrative center, 12; Gerov's career in, 35; Lyuben Karavelov studies in, 39; birthplace of Stoilov, 126; Karavelov and Slaveikov take refuge in, 218; *Nezavisimost* published in, 218
- Pisarev, Dmitrii Ivanovich, influence on Lyuben Karavelov, 39; influence on Botiov, 44

## Index

- Pleven, Battenberg participates in siege of, 136  
Plovdiv, *see* Philippopolis  
*Policy of Russia and of the Great Powers*, 1859, by Seliminski, 35-36  
Polish refugees, 1849, influence in Bulgaria, 24  
Political controversy, sources of, 112  
Political independence, movement for, discussed in press, 31  
Political thought, in pre-liberation Bulgaria, 31-47  
Polyakov, promotes Russian banking interests in Bulgaria, 183-184; represents Russian railroad interests, 217  
Pomyanov, Konstantin, education and career as Conservative leader, 127  
Prague, Pomyanov studies in, 127  
Press, Bulgarian, issues discussed in, 31-33, 45  
Press, freedom of, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 92; restrictions desired by Battenberg, 166, 177; suspended by Battenberg, 204  
Press law, Turkish, 1865, invoked by Battenberg, 204; sustained by court of cassation, 204; provisions, 204-205  
Press, party, analyzed, 124-133  
Prince, powers of, discussed before Constitutional Assembly, 60; in Organic Statute, 66; discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 84; reduced, 89; with regard to constitutional amendment, 102  
Privy council, rumors concerning, 216  
Property rights, protected in Organic Statute, 66-67  
Proselytizing, opposed by committee of fifteen, 82  
Provincial councils, represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69  
Provisional government, Russian, organization and objectives, 266-267  
Pushkin, Alexander, influence on Bulgarian literature, 30  
Queillé, Eumène, connected with Bulgarian railroad interests, 217  
Questionnaire, sent to Bulgarian notables by Lukiyarov, 59  
Radoslavov, Vasil, views on Bulgarian party system, 117; editor of *Súznanie*, 132; helps reorganize Liberal Party, 234  
Railroads, Bulgarian, rival Russian and Bulgarian plans, 216-217; Russian plans frustrated by Conservatives, 230; Russian difficulties in obtaining concessions, 235-236; final negotiations with Austria-Hungary, 245; government ownership advocated by Petko Karavelov, 262-263  
Rakovski, Georgi Stoïkov, supports plan for dualism, 33; life, 37; conflict with *chorbajis*, 37; author of *Gorski pútnik*, 37; editor of *Dunavski lebed*, 37; political ideas, 38-39; influence of his ideas in Constitutional Assembly, 113; leader of extremists, 266  
Reading rooms, role in renaissance, 26  
Regency, in Organic Statute, 66  
Reni, workers' communes in, 16  
Revolution, French, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30  
Rila, monastery of, represented in Constitutional Assembly, 69  
*Risorgimento*, Italian, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30  
Robert College, influence on Bulgarian colony in Constantinople, 28; participation of graduates in Constitutional Assembly, 70-71; Stoilov graduates from, 126; Stambolov suggested for scholarship in, 129; Ivan P. Slaveïkov studies in, 130  
Rödiger, Colonel Aleksandr Fedorovich, dismissed from war ministry by Battenberg, 247; recalled by Russian government, 248  
Römmlingen, Colonel, minister of interior and of war in first Batten-

## Index

- berg cabinet, 211; supervises elections for council of state, 213
- Rumania, Rakovski advocates friendly relations with, 38; in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; Russia's experience in, precedent for Bulgarian policy, 144; in Balkan politics after Treaty of Berlin, 151; possible union with Bulgaria rumored, 207
- Ruschuk, on Turkish trade route, 13; newspaper published in, 21; headquarters of Russian administrative province, 55; Battenberg and Prince Carol meet in, 151; Liberal congress held in, 234
- Ruschuk-Vienna railroad, purchased from Great Britain, 263-264
- Russia, influence in Bulgaria, 29-31; administration of Bulgaria, 52-57; policy regarding Bulgarian "national question," 76-77; policies in Bulgaria, 142-148, 268-271; policy regarding Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 196-201, 210; influence in Bulgaria reduced by coalition cabinet, 243-244; necessity for aggressive policy in Bulgaria recognized, 259
- Russian officials, rivalry with Conservatives for control of council of state, 211-214; constitutional views, 237
- Russian-Turkish war, 1877-78, as culmination of Near Eastern crisis, 21
- Safařík, Pavel Josef, influence in Bulgaria, 27
- St. Petersburg, Slavic Benevolent Society established in, 30; visited by Battenberg, 142
- Salisbury, Lord, sounded out with regard to Battenberg's candidacy, 138
- Salonica, Greek schools in, 26
- San Stefano, treaty of, provisions for a Bulgarian government, 3; provisions for constitutional assembly, 57; rallying point for Bulgarian nationalism, 112
- Sarafov, M. K., minister of education in second Liberal cabinet, 186
- Savov, helps reorganize Liberal Party, 234
- Schefer, French diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, attends Constitutional Assembly, 73; supports Battenberg in first cabinet crisis, 169
- Schnepfenthal, Battenberg educated in, 136
- Schuyler, Eugene, presents Bulgarian reforms to Constantinople Conference, 22
- Schuyler-Tseretelev proposals, considered by Constantinople Conference, 22-23; compared with Bulgarian Constitution, 49-50; yardstick of Bulgarian political maturity, 50
- Schweinitz, General von, estimate of Battenberg, 137
- Secret Bulgarian Central Committee, founded in Bucharest, 36
- Séhidnevniĭ novinar*, first Bulgarian daily, 132-133
- Self-government, Bulgarian, in the Ottoman Empire, 47-51, 265
- Seliminski, representative Bulgarian moderate, 35-36; author of *Policy of Russia*, 35-36; opinion of Slavic confederation, 36
- Senate, favored by committee of fifteen, 83; *see* Bicameral system
- Serbia, influence in Bulgaria, 27; Rakovski advocates friendly relations with, 38; in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; Russian experience in, as precedent for Bulgarian policy, 144; role in Balkan politics after Treaty of Berlin, 151; possible union with Bulgaria rumored, 207
- Shepelev, Colonel Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, favors aggressive Russian policy in Bulgaria, 145; advises Battenberg to appoint coalition cabinet, 156-157; opposes dissolution of first National Assembly, 165-166; sent to Alexander II as personal emissary of Batten-

## Index

- berg, 178; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 197-198
- Shumen, reading room opened in, 26; Ikonov teaches in, 125
- Shuvalov, Petr Andreievich, estimates Battenberg's position, 138
- Simeon, Bishop, heads Conservative delegation to Alexander III's coronation, 236-237
- Slaveïkov, Ivan Petkov, career as Liberal leader, 130; editor of *Tsë-lokupna Bûlgariya* and *Nezavisimost*, 131
- Slaveïkov, Petko Rachov, editor of *Gaïda* and *Makedoniya*, 33; political ideas, 46; appointed to Constitutional Assembly, 69; attacks report of committee of fifteen, 83; popular leader in Constitutional Assembly, 86-87; opposes proposal for senate in Constitutional Assembly, 94-98; role in Stamboliïski's fictitious Democratic Party, 123; Liberal leader, 129; editor of *Tsëlokupna Bûlgariya* and *Nezavisimost*, 131; sponsors Battenberg's candidacy at Grand National Assembly, 134; president of second National Assembly, 181; minister of interior in second Liberal cabinet, 186; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 206; goes to Philippopolis in voluntary exile, 218; opposes coalition government, 249; excluded from second coalition cabinet, 254
- Slavery, prohibited by Constitutional Assembly, 91
- Slavic Benevolent Committee, founded in Moscow, 30
- Sliven, factories in, 15; Western influence in, 25
- Smith, Adam, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Smyrna, Greek schools in, 26; Fotinov's *Lyuboslovie* published in, 32
- Sobolev, president of first Russian cabinet in Bulgaria, 221; outlines plans to Battenberg, 222; forms second cabinet, 233; withdraws support from Conservative Party, 234; recommends return to constitutional government, 235-236; misled by Tsankov, 241; resigns with his cabinet, 243
- Socialism, Russian, influence on Bulgarian political thought, 30-31
- Sofia, Turkish administrative center, 12; headquarters of Russian administrative province, 55
- Sofia-Ruschuk railroad, proposed by Russian interests, 184
- Sofronii, Bishop, pioneer of Bulgarian nationalism, 34
- Spiridon, pioneer of Bulgarian nationalism, 34
- Sredets*, Liberal organ, 132
- Stamboliïski, Aleksandûr, theory of class representation compared with report of committee of fifteen, 82; amateur political theorist, 123
- Stambolov, Stefan Nikolov, attitude towards Russia, 41; editor of *Nova Bûlgariya*, 47; opposes proposal for senate, 94; attacks Conservative Party, 113, 159; role in Stamboliïski's fictitious Democratic Party, 123; Liberal leader, 129; editor of *Sûedimie* and *Svoboden pečat*, 131-132; supports Battenberg's defiance of parliamentary procedure, 164; supports bill repealing constitutional amendments, 253
- Stara planina*, 1877-78, organ of Bulgarian extremists, 47
- Stara Zagora, factories in, 15
- Stephen, Sir James, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Stoïchev, minister of foreign affairs in second Liberal cabinet, 186
- Stoilov, Konstantin, member of Constitutional Assembly, 71; favors boycott of Constitutional Assembly, 77-78; favors a committee of fifteen to report on Organic Statute, 80; supports proposal for senate in Constitutional Assembly, 94; education and career as Conservative leader, 126; editor of *Bûlgarski glas*, 128; appointed Bat-

- tenberg's private secretary, 157; recommends appointment of coalition cabinet, 165; reaction to interview of Battenberg with Karavelov, 167; prepares memoir explaining Conservative constitutional views, 203; supports Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 209; temporary minister of foreign affairs in first Battenberg cabinet, 211; sponsors Conservative plan for council of state, 211; explains Tsankov's internment, 219; prepares memoir on constitutional amendments, 224; interns Bishop Meleti in Rila monastery, 231; accuses Russian cabinet of undermining Bulgarian independence, 234; minister of justice in first coalition cabinet, 244; favors postponement of Grand National Assembly, 252; attempts to form new coalition cabinet, 259
- Stoyanov, Hristo, prepares first electoral law, 99; minister of justice in first Liberal cabinet, 181; dropped from second Liberal cabinet, 185
- Stransky, G., introduces article forbidding censorship of press in Constitutional Assembly, 92
- Struve, promotes Russian railroad interests, 217
- Stubbs, William, influence on Petko Karavelov, 85
- Students, Bulgarian, attitude towards Russia, 41
- Succession to throne, in Organic Statute, 66
- Süedinenie*, Liberal organ, 131
- Suffrage, universal, merits discussed before Constitutional Assembly, 62-63
- Suknarov, Nikola, education and career as Liberal leader, 129-130; editor of *Nezavisimost*, 131; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 206; Liberal leader during Battenberg's regime, 219; appointed mayor of Sofia, 233; heads Liberal delegation attending Alexander III's coronation, 235; opposes coalition government, 249
- Suleiman I, economic measures, 13
- Supreme Administrative Council, in Russian administrative system in Bulgaria, 55
- Süznanie*, Liberal organ, 132
- Svishtov, on Turkish trade route, 13; reading room opened in, 26; birthplace of Dragan Tsankov, 88; birthplace of Nachevich, 127; birthplace of Suknarov, 129; Grand National Assembly meets in, 210
- Svoboda*, 1869-73, forum for Lyuben Karavelov's ideas, 40-41
- Svobodni pečat*, Liberal organ, 132
- Switzerland, in Lyuben Karavelov's political thought, 42
- Tabor, Pomyanov studies in, 127
- Tanzimat law, 1858, 10
- Teoharov, minister of education in second Battenberg cabinet, 214; minister of justice in second Russian cabinet, 233
- Textile industry, in Karlovo, 25; attracts foreign capital, 25
- Thessaly, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Thielau, von, German diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, represents the Great Powers at the Grand National Assembly, 202-203
- Thrace, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40; as part of an independent Bulgaria, in Bobchev's conception, 47
- Throne speech, answered by Liberals in first National Assembly, 165
- Tirnov, headquarters of Russian administrative province, 55; Constitutional Assembly meets in, 69, 75; Petko Karavelov Russian official in, 86; province of, Ivan P. Slaveikov governor of, 130; designated as meeting place for Grand National Assembly, 134; Battenberg participates in capture of, 136

## Index

- Tirnovovo Constitution, *see* Constitution, Bulgarian
- Tishev, Georgi, minister of interior in first Liberal cabinet, 181; dropped from Liberal cabinet, 186
- Title, prince's, controversy concerning, 158-159; change desired by Battenberg, 166; compromise reached between Battenberg and Liberals, 181
- Tocqueville, Alexis de, admired by Cherkaskii, 52
- Traditional issues, as a source of political controversy, 112-115
- Transylvania, in Lyuben Karavelov's Balkan federation, 40
- Trevna, role in the renaissance, 13
- Tribunals, military, established by Battenberg, 205
- Troyan, role in the renaissance, 13
- Tsankov, Dragan, editor of *Bŭlgariya*, 32; Uniate leader, 32; refuses to answer Lukiyanov's questionnaire, 63; opposes election of committee of fifteen, 80; biographical sketch, 88; role in Constitutional Assembly, 88; role in Liberal Party as interpreted by Stamboliŭski, 123; Liberal leader, 129, 215, 238-239; considered for position in coalition cabinet, 157; interviewed by Battenberg, 168; minister-president of first Liberal cabinet, 181; resigns as minister-president, 186; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 206; reconstructs Liberal Party, 218-219; interned in Vratsa, 219; conducts negotiations with Nachevich, 238; engineers overthrow of Russian regime, 240-242; head of first coalition cabinet, 244; supports postponement of Grand National Assembly, 252; heads right wing of Liberal Party, 254; attempts formation of new coalition cabinet, 259
- Tsankov, Kiriyaĭ, minister of foreign affairs in second Russian cabinet, 233
- Tsaribrod, on Turkish trade route, 13
- Tsarigradski vĕstnik*, 1848-61, role in renaissance, 32
- Tselokupna Bŭlgariya*, Liberal organ, 131; Stambolov attacks Conservatives in, 159
- Tseretelev, Prince, at Constantinople Conference, 22
- Tulcha, Ikononov teaches in, 125
- Tuleshkov, K., editor of *Bŭlgarski glas*, 47
- Tŭrnovska Konstitutsiya*, Liberal organ, 132
- Turtsiya*, 1864-73, role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Uhlans, Russian, Battenberg lieutenant in, 136
- Ultras, *see* Extremists
- Uniates, in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 32; Tsankov as leader of, 88
- Unicameral system, defended by Karavelov, 225-226
- Union of 1885, disintegrating factor in Bulgarian politics, 111
- United States of America, in Lyuben Karavelov's political thought, 42
- Upper chamber, favored by coalition cabinet, 250; structure and functions, 250-251
- Utin, N. I., represents Russian financial interests in Bulgaria, 183-184
- Varna, headquarters of Russian administrative province, 55; Sobolev visits Battenberg in, 222
- Vazov, Ivan, co-editor of *Stara planina*, 47; opposes Battenberg's *coup d'état*, 218, note 66
- Veto, right of, in Organic Statute, 66; prerogative of prince, 103
- Victoria, Queen, informed of Battenberg's qualifications, 139
- Videlina*, Liberal organ, 234
- Vidin, Turkish military center, 13; headquarters of Russian administrative province, 55; Petko Karavelov Russian official in, 86
- Vienna, commercial contacts with Bulgaria, 25; Dobrovski's *Mirozrenie* published in, 32; Bulgarian

## Index

- émigrés in, 33-34; Bulgarian society in, represented at Constitutional Assembly, 69; Tsankov studies in, 88; Nachevich studies in, 127
- Vienna-Constantinople railroad, Bulgarian obligations under Treaty of Berlin, 184; negotiations pressed by Austria-Hungary, 217
- Vilayet* system, established, 20-21
- Village communes, in Russian administrative system, 55
- Vitosh*, deprecates political strife, 120; Conservative organ, 128; refers to Balabanov as "His Excellency," 159
- Voïnikov, editor of *Dunavska zora*, 39
- Vremya*, 1865-67, role in movement for ecclesiastical independence, 33
- Vülchev, I. D., sponsors bill repealing constitutional amendments, 252-253
- Vülkovich, minister of foreign affairs in first Battenberg cabinet, 211; sponsors Conservative plan for council of state, 211; member of first Russian cabinet, 221
- Vúzrazhdane*, 1876, extremist organ, 47
- Waldemar of Denmark, candidate for position of prince, 135; appointment as prince demanded by Liberals, 236
- Washburn, George, opinion of Constitutional Assembly, 70
- Worship, freedom of, discussed in Constitutional Assembly, 90-91
- Yanina, Greek schools in, 26
- Zagreb, Suknarov studies in, 129; Milarov studies in, 130
- Zinovyev, I. A., supports Sobolev's recommendations, 236
- Zwiedinek, von, Austrian diplomatic agent and consul in Sofia, 1879, 73-74; impatience with delays in Constitutional Assembly, 79; opinion of Palgrave, 152